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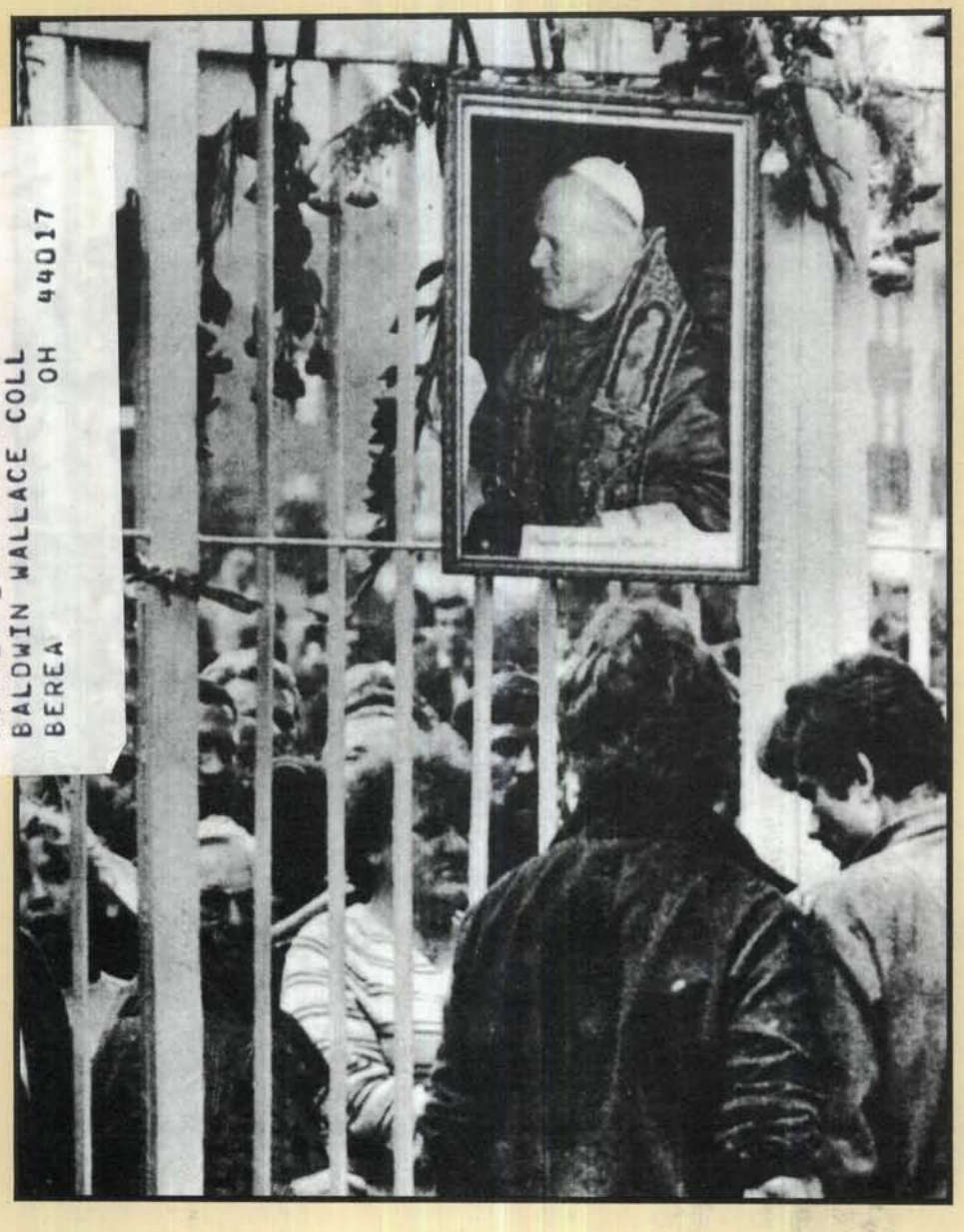

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Workers of Poland Unite

The Editors

Galbraith on the Establishment • Ann Douglas on Harlequin Romances

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TRB

from Washington
August 30, 1980

Prattle Power

(The regular author of TRB is on vacation. This article is written by another member of TNR*'s staff.)*

After a few months of respite, the producers price index—that early harbinger of consumer price movements—is rising again, and you may be wondering, "What can my local community do about inflation?" It seems unlikely, but in case you are wondering, the White House Office of Consumer Affairs has produced a book entitled *People Power: What Communities Are Doing to Counter Inflation.*

Before we examine this 411-page opus, I should point out that the correct answer to the question, "What can local communities do about inflation?" takes one word: "nothing." Economists disagree about the causes of and cures for inflation, but all of them, left and right, agree that erosion of the currency is a national problem that can be solved only by national government policy. What's lacking is the political courage to choose a policy or combination of policies and pursue it despite opposition from entrenched groups. Local communities can do about as much to stop inflation as they can to free the hostages in Iran.

The White House, understandably, would have us believe otherwise. The line being pushed in *People Power* is that if all we boys and girls got together in a Mickey-Rooney-and-Shirley-Temple-let's-put-on-a-show sort of way, why golly, we could push down those bad old prices in no time!

People Power is a relentlessly upbeat and elaborately illustrated collection of inspirational stories about local groups that have started food co-ops, installed windmills in community gardens, built housing for the elderly, lobbied against utility rate hikes, established mental health hotlines, and so on. My favorite sketch, taking up most of a page, shows a woman pinning her wash on a clothes line, and carries the caption: "Davis resident utilizes the sun's drying power." You get the idea.

Most of the projects described in *People Power*, taken individually, are wholly admirable. But the philosophy underlying the compilation is dismaying. It is that the cure for inflation is for individuals to organize themselves into interest groups, seek government protection and subsidy, and provide the basics of life for themselves outside the market system.

The section on food is typical in its economic befuddlement. (Keep in mind this is a White House production.) It begins by rejecting 200 years of economic thought and experience about the division of labor and economies of scale, as they have culminated in the modern supermarket chain. It then sets out, in inspirational tones, to reinvent the wheel. We learn of people who "save money" (if you don't count the value of their own labor or the land that's often donated by the local government) by growing and preparing their own food. Gardeners who join together and divide up the work, it turns out, do even better. People who don't wish to grow their own food, we learn, can form "food-buying clubs" which purchase food in bulk from producers or wholesalers. "But a large food club membership makes distribution of bulk food orders difficult from cramped quarters such as home garages." Therefore "a logical next step" is "to locate rental space and form storefront co-ops." These co-ops rely largely on volunteers, but the members find it worthwhile and convenient to hire a few paid employees.

Really successful storefront co-ops become—are you ready?—"supermarket co-ops."

> 'I used to have to go to a butcher for meat, a farmers' market for produce and pick up canned goods at a supermarket because one store didn't have the quality I wanted in everything I needed,' says Ruth Douglas, who now does all her grocery shopping at the supermarket-sized New Haven Food Cooperative. . . .

Supermarket co-ops are fully staffed by paid employees. (Or, as *People Power* puts it, they "create jobs for their communities.") Non-members are welcome to shop there, but members (shareholders?) get discounts (profits?). Finally, in Tucson, co-op supermarkets have found it useful to join in a common warehousing and distribution system. None dare call it a chain.

A community group in Kentucky has made it possible for a poor widow to live in a new three-bedroom house for only $54 a month. This certainly sounds anti-inflationary, but read on. The organization's administrative budget of $847,-000 was financed by church groups and the Community Economic Development Program (CEDP) of the federal Community Services Agency (CSA). Laborers were paid by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) program of the Department of Labor, and referred from a nearby Community Action Agency (CAA), another division of CSA. Home purchases and renovations are financed with subsidized loans from the Low-to-Moderate Income Housing Loans (Section 502) Program and the Very-Low-Income Housing Repair Loans and Grants (Section 504) Program of the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) in the Department of Agriculture (USDA). This string of acronyms, please note, doesn't include a single program—of which there are many—from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

No one should begrudge a poor widow a decent place to live, and other things for a decent life. It is not inflation but an inadequate system of redistribution that is denying her these things. A society that supplies its alms through so many overlapping layers of administration—each with its own expenses, eligibility rules, compliance review procedures, and other red tape—is serving its generous instincts less than its bureaucratic imperatives. *People Power* is completely of the world of organized time-wasting. A fascinating first chapter called "Basic Tools" describes essential techniques for combating inflation such as how to hold a meeting (refreshments are key), how to divide into subcommittees, how to conduct a community survey, how to raise money ("honorary membership or other special recognition" strongly recommended), and how to write a press release.

What this economy needs is fewer press releases, honorary awards, meetings, and subcommittees; fewer organized interest groups stalking the Federal Register for prey; fewer people growing or administering programs to help others grow food (and more making computer chips). Of course it also needs a president who is above giving White House endorsement to malarkey like *People Power*, and who understands (or at least has advisers who understand) why it's malarkey.

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Correspondence

The Present Danger

To the editors:

Ronald Steel's "The Absent Danger" (*TNR*, August 16) was a brilliant analysis of the domestic frustrations that are fueling the current advocacy—and advocates—of holy war against the Soviets. I hope *TNR* will send a copy of the article to everyone involved in foreign policy making and the election campaign. Steel is right to suggest that the Russians flop at everything they try, but they do manage to escalate right-wing paranoia in America, further raise the defense budget, and thus divert funds badly needed to deal with unemployment and other domestic economic problems. That pattern may ultimately hurt the country more than the attempt by Norman Podhoretz and Company to panic us into World War III.

Herbert J. Gans
New York, New York

To the editors:

Without entering into a defense of Norman Podhoretz or the Committee on the Present Danger, perhaps one may point out that some of Ronald Steel's "facts" (to ape his quotation marks) are at least as screwy as Podhoretz's. His "fact that Turkey had been an ally of Nazi Germany" cannot be squared with that nation's (late) entry into the war against Germany, or its presence in San Francisco as a founding member of the United Nations. And his statement that "there was never a threat of invasion" associated with the Russian demand for condominium over the Straits papers over rather too easily the Russian denunciation of a 20-year-old non-aggression treaty with Turkey, on March 19, 1945. Generally, the abrogation of such a treaty at least implies a pretty serious threat.

Martin Mayer
New York, New York

Ronald Steel replies:

Although the Turks were nominally neutral during the war, they leaned heavily toward Nazi Germany. Their admission to the UN, like that of Argentina, was in no sense a reward for good behavior.

As for the Dardanelles, Roosevelt and Churchill agreed at Yalta in February 1945 that the Russians should have a share in control of the straits, a decision later endorsed at Potsdam. Not until August 1946, a year and a half after they abrogated their treaty with the Turks, did the Russians fully press their claims. By that time the Americans and the British had changed their minds. While the Russians certainly pressured the Turks, to say they threatened invasion would be an exaggeration.

Self-serving eulogy

To the editors:

In his pious, self-serving eulogy to Hans Morgenthau (*TNR*, August 2 & 9), Henry Kissinger, that great conniver, gives us yet another display of his limitless capacity for shameless deceitfulness. Kissinger will even stoop to using the death of someone he claims was a friend to advance a false image of himself. Kissinger would have us believe that his boundless immorality in public office wasn't so horrible after all, and that his approach has its roots in the ideas of Hans Morgenthau, one of the world's outstanding political scientists. Kissinger can't rightly justify his actions in public office by Hans Morgenthau's ideas.

Joseph Forbes
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Abortion rights for all

To the editors:

I find it extremely irritating when male journalists tell me, as does Morton Kondracke (Politics: "The GOP Light Show," *TNR*, July 26) that the Republican party's abortion platform would have the "practical effect" of "forc[ing] poor women to visit back-alley abortionists while rich women fly off to France or Japan to end unwanted pregnancies." In making the right to abortion a poverty issue, liberals are playing right into conservative hands. All American women have the right, according to the Supreme Court decision, to have a legal abortion. If I became pregnant today, I would most certainly have an abortion because (1) I happen to be 48, and (2) I don't want to have any more children. Am I therefore expected to fly to Paris, Japan, or anywhere else? On the contrary, I take it to be my legal right to go to my own gynecologist and have the abortion at my own community or university hospital.

To turn the right-to-life debate into a poverty issue, as so many liberals are foolishly doing, is to imply that there is, in fact, something basically wrong with abortion, but that it's a necessary evil when poor black teenagers or unmarried welfare mothers are concerned. This is the purest cant: the next step would be to argue that, if birth control were made illegal, it would mainly affect the poor; "rich" women could presumably buy the Pill on the black market.

Marjorie Perloff
Pacific Palisades, California

Expensive service

To the editors:

I am always entertained by *TNR*'s informative and well-written articles, and by the cheerily cockeyed fashion in which its editors peer at the world. To say that, "As a whole, this society is not overtaxed" ("Tax Seduction," *TNR*, July 5 & 12), however, is simply too topsy-turvy a view to pass unchallenged. There are millions of American families in which both spouses must work, in which one member may hold two or three jobs, or in which life is needlessly cruel due to the heavy weight of taxation (including that most perverse of taxes, inflation). These would surely constitute a strong argument contrary to your own.

To claim that "There are many services our government should be providing for us that it is not" is equally misguided. The public is fed up with the increasingly expensive "service" of government itself, which, in a holy crusade to care for everyone, has left many unable to care for themselves.

Christopher Jefferson
Daly City, California

Sad Sack's skills

To the editors:

While Professor Snyder's moans about "Son of Sad Sack" (*TNR*, July 5 & 12) are sufficiently pitiful to arouse concern in even the fuzziest liberal, he has meticulously avoided the vital question: what is a military force *for?*

The prime function of the military is assuredly not that of providing a large public employment program, even though it seems to be so regarded by the administration and Congress. The result has been an influx of unemployables whose training for even the least technical jobs has been frustrated by their inability to read English at sixth-

(continued on page 39)

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Cover: Striking Polish workers and supporters at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, August 18. Associated Press photo. Articles on pages 5 and 21.

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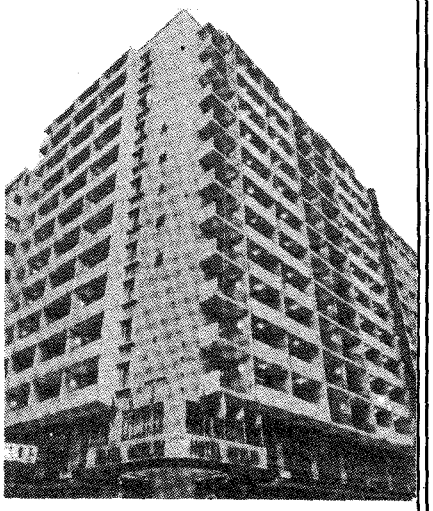

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

August 30, 1980

Help the Poles

The following words won Jimmy Carter the most enthusiastic applause of any during his acceptance speech at Madison Square Garden August 14: "If the world is to have a future of peace as well as freedom, America must continue to defend human rights. The new Republican leaders oppose our human rights policies. They want to scrap it. They seem to think it is naive for America to stand up for freedom and democracy. Just what do they think our country should stand for? Ask the former political prisoners who now live in freedom if we should abandon our stand on human rights. . . . Ask the dissidents in the Soviet Union . . . the Hungarian-Americans, the Polish-Americans. . . . Ask the American people. As long as I am president, we will hold high the banner of human rights."

Do these words have any relation to actual administration policy? Just ask the Polish strikers in Gdansk and Gdynia. Four days after Carter's speech, the State Department's official spokesman declared that "the domestic problems in Poland are a matter for the Polish people and Polish authorities to work out. We do not believe that any further comment from the US government would be helpful as the situation is evolving in Poland." Some human rights banner, this. It is all too typical of past administration behavior: big talk, no substance.

We have no doubt that the administration will recover and make a human rights case out of the events in Poland. It began doing so, in fact, on August 20 and 21, protesting Soviet jamming of Western radio broadcasts and expressing concern for Polish dissidents who were arrested. We have no doubt that a memo has been prepared setting forth a strategy for pummeling the East Bloc over its other human rights depredations as the Helsinki review conference prepares to meet in Madrid in October. Of course all of this will be for domestic political consumption—designed to woo Hungarian-American and Polish-American voters. The State Department's statement of August 18 indicated the true reflexive attitude of the administration toward the aspirations of the Polish strikers. In its days of innocence and youth, the administration plunged into human rights controversies with abandon, but now its underlying attitude is that they are more trouble than they are worth—except, of course, when political hay is to be made of them.

What should the administration have said? It could have said: "We applaud the aspirations of the Polish people for political and economic freedom. We believe they reflect the yearning of all mankind for justice and liberty. We hope that the Polish people and their government can peacefully resolve their differences in a way that will expand the rights of individual citizens. Any military action to suppress human rights in Poland—especially from outside Poland's borders—would seriously threaten the prospects for improved East-West relations." Such a statement would have been diplomatic enough, and not at all provocative, but would have gotten the message through: carry on, strikers, we're with you. All you other people in the world, just remember who represents freedom and progress on this planet, and whose system entails servitude and stagnation. To the Polish government and the Soviets, it would have said that ruthless suppression of the strikes would lead to further rupturing of East-West cooperation.

The administration argues that it merely is being cautious in not speaking out in support of the Polish strikers. It points out that Pope John Paul II, certainly an interested party, said nothing either for several days, and that the Soviet Union also has been restrained. But we are reasonably sure that the pope's official silence masks intense—and influential—involvement in the Polish crisis. The Soviet Union surely is commanding the Polish government to get the strike

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settled with a minimum of political concessions—or else. So far as we can see, the United States is doing nothing to affect the situation in Poland either publicly or privately. Indeed, the prevailing attitude at the State Department is that there is nothing useful we can do, and if we try to do anything, it will only cause harm.

American diplomats are rendered impotent by an Eastern European variant of the post-Vietnam syndrome. It might be called the post-Budapest syndrome. In 1956 the United States egged on Hungarian revolutionaries, gave them reason to think the United States might intervene on their side against the Soviets, only to leave them prey to tanks and the secret police. Never again, say American diplomats. Since we know we won't intervene militarily, we ought to keep our mouths shut. There is another syndrome at work here, too, which might be called post-Sakharov syndrome: the minute the United States intervenes in the internal affairs of a communist country, it makes things worse for those we are trying to help, as witness the Soviet crackdown on its dissidents after President Carter sent his letter to Andrei Sakharov. In this case, if we publicly side with the Polish dissidents, we may push the Soviets or the Polish regime to crack down, using "outside agitation" as a pretext.

Some administration officials are taking the line that what's happening in Poland is merely a labor dispute. One State Department official asked rhetorically, "Should we take a side in the [French] fisherman's dispute in Cherbourg?" A White House official, presumably having read the same talking paper, asked, "Is the United States supposed to take a position in a British steel strike?" Such statements scarcely deserve an answer, but let us state it clearly nonetheless: the Polish strikes may have started over money and meat prices, but now they are about freedom. The strikers are demanding an end to censorship, the release of political prisoners, the right to establish free trade unions, and the abolition of special privileges for Communist party members. The Polish government wants to wait it out and buy off the strikers with some economic concessions. The American government, apparently terrified at the prospect of Soviet intervention, seems to want the Polish government to succeed.

We, too, understand that there are limits beyond which the Soviet Union will not let Poland go. We do not want to see a repetition of Prague 1968 or Budapest 1956. We are certainly not urging that the US government imply that the United States would intervene militarily to assist a workers' revolt. But that is not the same as saying that the US is powerless and must remain silent. Nor is it the same as thinking (as many in the US government apparently do) that everybody would be better off if the Polish government raised wages, imported some more meat, and got the strikers to return to work.

Our hope should be that the strikers will succeed in expanding political liberty in Poland without inciting Soviet repression. We think there is a good chance this can be accomplished. The Soviets have their hands full with one messy insurgency in Afghanistan. If the Soviets invaded Poland, they would have two, and Polish resistance (possibly inspired by Afghanistan's example) might be even stiffer and more heroic. It certainly would be more public. It would doom the Soviet Union's "West-politik"—the effort to woo Western Europe away from the United States. A Polish rebellion would be a propaganda nightmare for the Soviets. If Polish army units took part, it would be a strategic nightmare, too, raising questions about the solidarity of the Warsaw Pact and even bigger questions about the true power of the Soviet Union.

For all these reasons, the Soviets are unlikely to intervene in Poland precipitously. This gives the dissidents an opportunity to press their demands to expand the freedom of the Polish people. Obviously there are limits beyond which they cannot go. The Soviet Union will not permit Poland to become a Western-oriented democracy or probably any kind of democracy. But it's not for the US to second-guess the limits of Soviet tolerance, or for government officials to hope the strike can be settled by mere economic concessions. We should favor democracy and human rights for the Polish people because we favor democracy and human rights everywhere. The Soviet Union might use our statements as a pretext for intervention, but they will claim our involvement as a pretext anyway, even when we are not involved, as they did in Afghanistan.

There is little that the United States can do to deter the Soviets from intervening in Poland if they are of a mind to do so. We are not going to fight them if they do, and US-Soviet detente has deteriorated so badly that we are without important carrots and sticks. But we can have some influence on the Polish government, particularly in concert with our allies, to keep it from doing the Soviet Union's repressive dirty work. The Polish economy operates (to the extent that it does at all) on a diet of Western loans and credits. Poland owes the West nearly $20 billion. Just to pay principal and interest on the debt requires nearly six billion dollars per year, acording to a recent CIA study, which is more than it earns every year in exports to the West. So the Poles constantly are borrowing more and rescheduling their loans. In the event of a bloody crackdown, the West surely could squeeze Poland, if it chose, by being less generous with new loans.

The United States is not Poland's biggest creditor or Western trading partner, but we do have leverage. We have accorded Poland most-favored-nation trade status, which allows Poland to earn some $200 million a year in exports that it wouldn't make otherwise. Total Polish exports to the US are about $600 million and could be cut back in the event of severe repression. So could commodity credits, which pay for some $550 million worth of food that Poland is importing this year from the US and $50 million in Eximbank guarantees for industrial equipment. The US has been giving

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Poland special treatment among all the communist countries in hopes that close contact with the West would lead to gradual liberalization. Poland should be made to understand that repression will undermine the basis of good relations with the US, and liberalization will expand it.

Now It's Reagan's War

Ronald Reagan's decision to reintroduce the Vietnam War as a political issue at this late date presumably is calculated. Reagan's advisers must have decided that 12 years after Lyndon Johnson was driven from office by opposition to American involvement in Vietnam, a majority of voters now believes that involvement was "a noble cause." Can these Republican gentlemen have calculated correctly? Can memories be so short?

According to the capsule history in Reagan's speech last week before the Veterans of Foreign Wars, what the United States did in Vietnam was to defend "a small country newly free from colonial rule . . . against a totalitarian neighbor bent on conquest." That small free country presumably was South Vietnam, the "totalitarian neighbor" North Vietnam.

There are some problems with this summary. If that small country was "free from colonial rule," it was certainly no thanks to the United States, which spent half a billion dollars between 1950 and 1954 in support of the French effort to keep Indochina under its colonial rule. The division of Vietnam into two separate countries—neither one "free"—was a creature of the Geneva agreement of 1954 ending the French Indochina war. That agreement provided for elections two years later to determine the future of South Vietnam, but the United States government canceled these elections when it became clear they would lead to reunification of the country under Ho Chi Minh. Never, during the entire American enterprise in Vietnam, was there any evidence that a majority of people in the south desired anything other than this reunification.

What has happened in Indochina since the United States lost and left has been awful. But it's hard to see how this justifies the havoc we wreaked over the previous decade, or the policy we pursued over the previous quarter century. What would life be like today in Indochina if we had allowed Ho Chi Minh to reunify Vietnam peacefully in 1956? Impossible to say, of course. But there would be less landscape destroyed by bombs and defoliants; there would be fewer corpses and cripples directly on America's conscience; and surely it is possible that the vengeful hatred and fanaticism that erupted after 1975 never would have festered in the first place.

It does not imply disrespect for American veterans of Vietnam, or for the Americans who died there, to say that they served nobly in what was, unfortunately, an ignoble cause. And it's important to the health of future veterans that this distinction be kept clear. Ronald Reagan is exactly right to say that we should "never again ask young men to fight and possibly die in a war our government is afraid to win." His mistake is implying that Vietnam was a war we should have been eager to win.

White House Watch
Target Practice

At a time when the electorate is trudging toward a choice between two presidential candidates, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, who depress more people than they enthuse, and a third, John B. Anderson, who should depress and repel more people than he does, any form of comic relief on a national scale is welcome. A little relief was offered in early August, in a guise so weird that it was not adequately recognized as the comedy that it was.

The relief arose from that most dreadful and uncomic of subjects, nuclear warfare. The comedy was not in the subject but in how the precipitating event, the signing by Jimmy Carter of Presidential Directive 59, came about and was publicized and perceived. The signing seems to have been triggered by a savage caricature and criticism of Carter nuclear doctrine in the 1980 Republican platform. One of the authors of the platform language, a friend who prefers anonymity, discerned quickly and in anguish that the doctrinal revision decreed in PD 59 invalidates the GOP criticism and, if Reagan is uncharacteristically honest about it, deprives him of what was to have been a major line of campaign attack. The news of the revision of policy and then of the confirming directive emerged in a way that continues at this writing to be in dispute among the tiny minority of citizens who care about how news originates and is or is not orchestrated by interested sources.

A side effect was yet another display of disorder and poor coordination at the top of the Carter administration. Secretary of State Edmund Muskie, a famous weeper, cried in public that he'd been excluded from the deliberations which ended with Secretary of Defense Harold Brown and the President's wily national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, bringing Carter around to signing the directive. One may be sure that Carter didn't laugh at this or any other aspect of the affair. But there really is something funny about such eminences as Muskie, Brown, and Brzezinski fouling up a simple process of communication and then scrambling to discourage a widespread suspicion that the exclusion of Muskie was deliberate.

PD 59 ordered the Defense Department's target

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selectors and the senior civilian and military officials who pass upon the selections to widen the variety of Soviet objectives designated for nuclear attack. The first news reports of the conclusion that such a change in targeting was necesary and that the President had signed a directive requiring the change conveyed a net impression that the primary targets of US nuclear attack hereafter would be military instead of civilian—Soviet military installations, missile centers, command posts, Soviet commanders themselves—rather than the Soviet population centers and populations that are supposed to have been the primary targets until now. It's been assumed simultaneously that US population centers and populations are the Soviet Union's primary targets, too.

The basis of the doctrine called MAD, for "mutual assured destruction," is the concept of civilian obliteration. With it is a corollary assumption that the consequence of nuclear warfare in this style and on this scale would be so awful that neither US nor Soviet leaders would initiate it or lesser, "limited" nuclear combat that might—many think, surely would—escalate into all-out MAD warfare. As instant experts on the subject have been rushing to note in recent days, actual US targeting doctrine and practice have never been as simple as MAD alone indicates. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, who popularized mutual assured destruction as a phrase and a concept in the 1960s, favored and required a mix of civilian and military targets. Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger put more emphasis than his predecessors had upon military objectives and so became known as the daddy of maximum targeting flexibility. In his first "state of the world" report in 1970, Henry Kissinger said that no president should be confronted with the stark choice between surrender and assured obliteration. In his 1979 and 1980 defense posture statements, Secretary Brown indicated that the US was moving toward greater flexibility in its targeting in order to make its policy of deterrence more credible to the Soviets.

Yet at a press conference in December 1978 and in his 1979 State of the Union message, President Carter spoke of the awesome power to destroy Soviet cities and populations and so perpetuated the impression that US nuclear and strategic policy is to preserve that power and threat for purposes of deterrence. His rhetoric gave Republican platform drafters an excuse for saying in the dagger paragraph on nuclear policy:

> An administration that can defend its interest only by threatening the mass extermination of civilians, as Mr. Carter implied in 1979, dooms itself to strategic and eventually geopolitical paralysis. Such a strategy is simply not credible and therefore is ineffectual. . . . We reject the mutual-assured-destruction (MAD) strategy of the Carter administration. . . . We propose, instead, a credible strategy which will deter a Soviet attack by the clear capability of our forces to survive and ultimately to destroy Soviet military targets.

What the GOP plank called "a Hobson's choice between mass mutual suicide and surrender" was precisely what Brown, Brzezinski, and a team of targeting reviewers headed by Leon Sloss, a former State and Defense department gnome who is now a private consultant, had been working since late 1977 to escape. The broadened mix of civilian and military targets directed by PD 59 is their means of escape. In what official and private students of nuclear problems call "the strategic community," it is generally supposed but not proved that the following sequence explains the disclosure of the revised doctrine and the timing of the directive.

The GOP platform draft with its sharp critique of targeting doctrine was distributed to the press July 11 and formally released July 14. A spate of unattributable briefings and position papers, asserting correctly that military objectives never had been excluded from US targeting, soon erupted at the Defense Department. At the urging of Brown and Brzezinski, Carter signed PD 59 on July 25 without telling Muskie that it existed. The *Boston Globe* of July 27 published a report by its Pentagon correspondent, former defense information official William Beecher, that

> The Carter administration is developing a modified nuclear war strategy. . . . The key element of the strategy is to de-emphasize the threat to smash Russian cities. . . . The major stress is on systematically destroying Soviet military forces, Soviet leaders . . . and key factories outside major cities.

Beecher suggested that the change was connected with the 1980 presidential campaign and quoted an unnamed official: "If it will help steal some of Ronald Reagan's thunder on the defense issue, don't be surprised if it surfaces before the November election." Beecher did not report that PD 59 had been signed.

The *Globe* story didn't make the splash that it should have made. When the splash did come, from reports in the August 6 editions of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* that the directive had been signed, the supposition that Brzezinski had planted the stories in order to humiliate Muskie, blunt the Republican platform thrust, and help Carter at the upcoming Democratic convention, became an article of faith and fact in the stragetic community and among Washington journalists. Beecher's earlier scoop, little noticed though it was, demolished the notion that the entire process of disclosure had been orchestrated by Brzezinski or anybody else. At a meeting in Norway in June, well before the GOP platform was drafted, Brown had warned NATO defense ministers that a change in US targeting doctrine was likely. Journalists do not ask other journalists where they got their beats, so I'm reduced here to information or misinformation from interested officials and second-hand gossip.

Michael Getler of the *Post* and Richard Burt of the *Times* got their initial stories separately and in the course of striving to catch up with Beecher. Each

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thought until near press time that he had a clean beat on the signing. Brzezinski did some briefing and authorized other briefing by members of the National Security Council staff. But it mostly followed the first publication and didn't add up to the brilliant orchestration that the gossips credited Brzezinski with. More of the initial information came from the Defense Department than from the NSC. It couldn't come from the State Department; some of the department's senior staffers had been grudgingly let into early deliberations in 1978-79 but were effectively excluded, along with Muskie, from the decisive deliberations in the summer of 1980.

There are two explanations for the exclusion and both of them make some sense. Muskie's communication with his people at State, and theirs with him, is less than perfect. Maybe none of them knew about the final Defense-NSC deliberations. But many of them undoubtedly knew with everybody else in the strategic community about the years of study and discussion that preceded the last phase. A second explanation is that State's upper level is loaded with officials who profoundly distrust the hardened targeting policy, fear that it will encourage dangerous Soviet countermoves, and (so advocates of the PD 59 approach believe) would never have consented to the change if it had been submitted to them for approval. An explanation of the final insult to Muskie is that Brown, Brzezinski, and Muskie among them screwed up when Brown mentioned the change at a meeting on August 5. Brown didn't make the importance of the matter clear and Muskie didn't listen closely.

Neither explanation satisfies skeptics who demand a devil and, in such situations as this one, name him Brzezinski. Given his administration and these people, who needs a devil?

John Osborne

On the Hill

Export Advice

Exports are a hot topic in Washington these days, and it's not hard to see why. Long a bastion of self-reliance, the US has run a trade deficit off and on since 1971. Last year the total deficit was $29 billion; this year it is expected to reach a record $35 billion. Rising imports have brought hard times for several important American industries, including automobiles, steel, and textiles. One answer to this problem is to increase US exports, giving the Japanese, Germans, and French a taste of their own medicine. Most of the agitation for the federal government to do more to promote exports has come from businessmen, who not coincidentally have the most to gain from the help. Business groups like the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers have been at the front of the parade, complaining that Washington not only fails to provide the help exporters need to expand sales abroad, but actually places obstacles in their way. Recently *Business Week*, the mouthpiece of the Fortune 500, headlined a cover story with a complaint: "The new export policy works like the old—badly." Inside, it editorialized that "until the US gets serious about a strong export policy, it will have neither a strong dollar, nor a strong economy, nor a strong position of leadership in the world."

From all the complaining, you'd think American exporters were getting left behind in the race for foreign markets. In fact they're doing quite well, thank you. One of the better-kept secrets around Washington is that the dollar volume of US exports actually rose 65 percent during 1978 and 1979. Even when exports of farm products are excluded, exports rose eight percent in 1978 and 12 percent in 1979. In the last decade exports have quadrupled in dollar volume and have doubled as a percentage of GNP (a measure which corrects for inflation). This year, despite trade embargoes on the Soviet Union and Iran, exports have continued to grow.

But when businessmen start talking about the importance to the nation of promoting exports, one should respond in the same way as when a doctor starts talking about ethics: keep an eye on your wallet. What are touted as measures to erase the trade deficit, create new jobs, and preserve America's sacred leadership in world affairs usually turn out to be devices to make businessmen richer.

A good example is the Export-Import Bank, which is also a good example of the government's talent for misnomer. The Bank is intended only to promote exports; it has nothing to do with imports. (If you don't believe it, just try getting a loan from Eximbank to import a boatload of Toyotas.) Eximbank was set up in its present form in 1945, with the purpose of promoting exports by providing direct loans, loan guarantees, exporter credit insurance, and the like. If a foreign company wants to buy goods from a US manufacturer, for example, Eximbank will provide a loan to the foreign company or a guarantee of repayment to a US bank making the loan. A few months back Eximbank was involved in a minor scandal when it was revealed that Australian newspaper magnate Rupert Murdoch (who owns several American newspapers and magazines) had received a loan to buy some Boeing airplanes shortly after meeting with President Carter and shortly after his *New York Post* endorsed Carter in the New York Democratic primary. Pundits raised all sorts of questions about the relationship among the meeting, the loan, and the endorsement. No one asked why the US government should be lending money to an Australian multimillionaire.

A broader question is why the US government

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should be lending money to any foreigners, even those who want to use the money to buy American goods. The premise seems to be that exports are intrinsically good, even if the buyer has to be enticed with below-market financing. But obviously the value of exports to the nation is only what they sell for—otherwise why not give them away?—and if the cost to the buyer is being lowered, it has to be made up elsewhere. In the case of Eximbank, it's a little complicated. There is no direct government subsidy involved, since Eximbank borrows from the Treasury and lends the money. But lately Eximbank has been charging less in interest than it has to pay the Treasury (which is identical to what the Treasury has to pay lenders)—nearly five percent less. The cost to the taxpayer is the difference between what the Treasury pays its creditors and what Eximbank charges its borrowers.

The cost might be justified if Eximbank were responsible for a huge surge of exports. But there is no reliable evidence that it is. According to the Treasury Department and the Bank's own data, some 70 percent of the purchases made with Eximbank loans would not have been made without Eximbank's help. But this sounds wildly exaggerated. Rachel McCulloch, an international trade economist at the University of Wisconsin, says Treasury's estimate is "impossible to believe. Seven percent might be plausible." The reason, she says, is that credit terms are only a minor part of a transaction.

It's interesting to note where the money goes. There are two sets of beneficiaries of Eximbank's largesse: buyers abroad who get American goods cheaper than they would otherwise, and American sellers who get sales they might not get otherwise. Among the latter are a variety of big corporations. The biggest beneficiary is Boeing, with Westinghouse close behind. This reflects the fact that a large share of Eximbank's loans—about 40 percent—go to finance sales of commercial aircraft and nuclear reactors. Among the other welfare cases are General Electric, McDonnell Douglas, Chrysler, General Motors, and Control Data. The financing of airplanes and nuclear reactors is particularly hard to justify. Many of the aircraft sales involve narrow- or medium-bodied jets which are produced nowhere else, and which thus have no foreign competition. Eximbank is supposed to provide financing competitive with what rival nations provide, but there is no earthly reason it should provide financing when no competition exists. One may also wonder at the ethics of the American government positively encouraging other countries to buy nuclear reactors whose construction and use at home it discourages because of safety concerns.

Another good example of how the government promotes exports in silly ways is a program called DISC, an acronym for Domestic International Sales Corporation. Under a 1971 law, corporations can channel exports through DISCs, making them eligible for certain tax breaks which have the effect of lowering their tax liability on income from exports by 25 percent. The program's explicit purpose was to increase American exports. At the time DISC made some sense, because US exporters were handicapped by fixed exchange rates which overvalued the dollar and thus made US exports artificially expensive. But the establishment of floating exchange rates eliminated this problem. Under floating rates, a balance of payments deficit would be corrected in the long run by a devaluation of the dollar, which lowers the cost of American goods relative to those of other exporters. Floating rates also defeat the purpose of DISC, since they tend to offset the effect of any export subsidy. If exports rise compared to imports, the dollar will rise in value, thus raising the cost of exports and lowering the cost of imports. So to the extent that DISCs work, they are canceled out by exchange rate adjustments.

But there is considerable doubt about how much the DISC program actually increases exports to begin with. The Treasury Department notes that in many cases, exports by DISCs merely displace exports by non-DISC companies, since for "most products . . . non-DISC exports do compete with DISC exports." Transferring export sales from one company to another does nothing for the US balance of payments; it merely helps one company at the expense of another while squandering tax revenues. A study by the Congressional Research Service suggests that instead of stimulating sales, the DISC program often simply increases profits. It noted that DISC companies generally earned about twice as much profit on each dollar of sales as non-DISC companies. All these dubious benefits cost the Treasury $729 million in 1978—a lot of money for an unimpressive effect on exports.

As if these two programs weren't costly and ineffective enough, Congress is considering legislation which would have the effect of combining the worst features of the Eximbank and DISC and making the package available to more exporters. The bill is sponsored by Senator Adlai Stevenson and is intended to encourage the creation of Japanese-style export trading companies, which would permit hundreds of small American businesses to pool their efforts to penetrate foreign markets. Such trading companies already exist in the American grain trade, but the bill's proponents complain that fears of antitrust prosecution have inhibited their formation elsewhere. Hence it provides for a broader exemption from antitrust laws that exporters currently enjoy under the 1918 Webb-Pomerene Act, which allows some collective action by exporters. To

Coming:

What's the Use of Foreign Aid?

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the extent that this provision will facilitate innocuous efforts to increase export sales, it is perfectly sensible. But some care should be taken to ensure that it will not shield genuinely anti-competitive activities that could spill over into the domestic marketplace.

The bill, however, doesn't stop at merely removing one unneeded hurdle to exports. It goes on to provide for $20 million in loans and loan guarantees to small and medium-sized firms interested in forming export trading companies, to be channeled through the Economic Development Administration and the Small Business Administration. It also directs Eximbank to provide loan guarantees to these export companies. And it makes them eligible for the DISC tax breaks.

To broaden the privileges now provided by Eximbank and DISC, as this bill would, is to magnify the effects of two bankrupt policies which have been costly to the taxpayer without being valuable to the economy. It is an illusion to think the declining competitiveness of American companies in world markets can be reversed by a few palliatives like low-cost loans and tax breaks. There are real problems at the root of our present trade troubles—stagnant productivity, inadequate funding for research and development, lagging capital investment, and the biggest of all, chronic inflation. Our existing trade subsidies, and the new ones proposed by Stevenson, serve only to obscure the need for more fundamental reforms—and, of course, to enrich some businesses.

Stephen Chapman

What liberals share with Libertarians.

A Vote for Ed Clark

If you're part of the voting half of the adult population, you might want to think about giving the Libertarian party and its candidate, Ed Clark, a vote this autumn. Notice the order of the suggestion—Libertarian party first, name of candidate second. The emphasis is not on the candidate, with the name of his party almost as an afterthought.

A person without any party is someone without any outside discipline, without a set of principles shared with an even amorphously defined body of persons. This year we even have a major candidate who makes a virtue of having no party. To select John Anderson means to make a judgment on the man and the man alone, something that's not easy to do for the tens of millions who haven't had the pleasure of meeting the gentleman.

Not that you can be sure that a candidate, once elected, will adhere to what appear to be his party's guidelines and principles. Behold Jimmy Carter administering the hard money policies associated with the Republicans, as we saw Richard Nixon administering the price controls and budget deficit policies associated with the Democrats.

Nevertheless, while the major parties do represent tendencies, sentiments, and prejudices which make them somewhat distinguishable from each other, you must turn to the Libertarians to find a party that dominates and disciplines its candidate. Ed Clark, the non-charismatic Los Angeles lawyer of almost bureaucratic demeanor, did not capture the Libertarians as Ronald Reagan has seized the Republicans and Carter holds the Democrats.

Libertarians only nominate fellow Libertarians, so the party itself, this amalgam of strains and traditions in American life and politics, deserves looking into, if for no other reason than libertarianism is the only political philosophy to catch the imagination of younger people in the past few years. From a handful of persons in 1972, the party has grown to 5,000 or 6,000—or perhaps even more—loyal activists who have learned the lessons of persistence and organization. Without much of an assist from the mass media, Libertarians have evangelized and organized successfully enough to place Clark's name on the ballot in every state. This is one of the more important reasons for voting for him if you want to make an effective protest. Barry Commoner, worthy man that he is, will be on so few ballots this November it will be mathematically impossible for him to roll up the significant protest vote within Clark's reach.

How have the Libertarians been able to attract people? Who joins? Although most Libertarians, but not all, are ferocious, Adam Smithian free marketeers, the party doesn't attract big corporate money. The notable exception is the Koch (pronounced Coke) family of Witchita, Kansas. The Kochs operate one of America's largest privately held corporations (last year's gross has been estimated at around four billion dollars) and one of the Koch family members is running on the ticket with Clark. But generally American capitalism has held aloof from the party, which on first inspection seems undeviatingly committed to creating the social and political conditions business says it must have to thrive.

However, since Libertarians are unalterably opposed to such practices as subsidizing nuclear energy or limiting electric companies' liability when they have Three Mile Island-type accidents, most big business sorts quickly decide that this isn't the kind of government the corporations want. Repeal of these laws would also mean repeal of the laws protecting polluters from damage suits, which would make it much more difficult for outfits like Occidental Petroleum's Hooker Chemical to commit a Love Canal without having to pay heavy real and punitive damages. In the board rooms, they know EPA regulation is much gentler.

The people who join the Libertarian party often are second-generation, college-trained younger people

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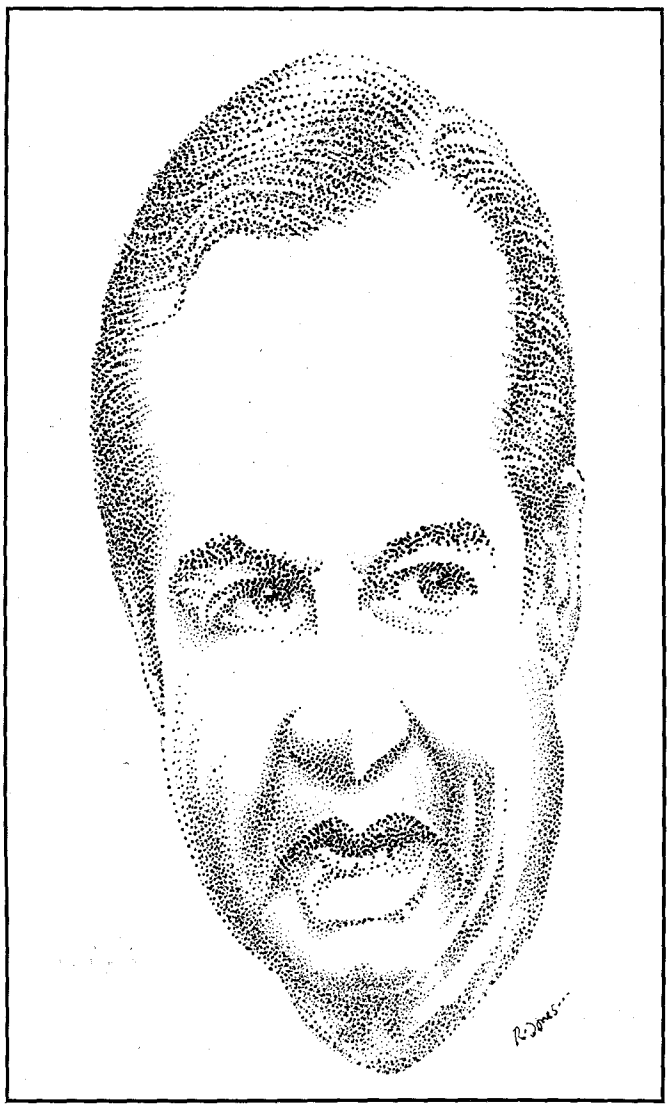

drawing of Ed Clark by Roger Jones

who believe all that stuff about the meritocracy. For them libertarianism is the way to keep life's race honest. This is the class that is convinced that they as individuals can do the job, any job; that they can found the business, provide the product, and do all that needs doing if they get the chance and if the tax man doesn't steal the rewards when they do.

But there is also a libertarianism of the left. It is composed of people who still honor the goals of the New Deal, the Fair Deal, and the Great Society but who need no more convincing that in the practical realm they can't be reached through the expensive Washington-centered bureaucracies characteristic of our era's failed liberalism. The Libertarian left doesn't dispute the neoconservative analysis of what went wrong, but does disagree about what to do about it.

Instead of collapsing into the arms of General Electric while taking wild walks on the supply side, the Libertarian left is as unwilling to live under the rule of centralized corporate power as of centralized government power. Instead, this new left is embracing a mixture of old ideas, of Jefferson and Kropotkin, a vision which sees the non-coercive Libertarian society as the rich, brown ground for cooperative and commune, for building distributive justice from the ground up instead of praying for its administration from the top down through the Department of Human Resources, or whatever ungainly social worky title they've given Patricia Harris's reorganized department.

Primitive capitalists and anarcho-syndicalists are able to bed down side by side in the Libertarian party because both share the goal of the voluntary society where, unregimented, un-uniform, and uncentralized, there is room and freedom for competing systems and values. All this may sound a trifle romantic and impractical; however, a political party that shares a dream is less likely to lose its way entirely. With electoral success, should it ever come, there will be full opportunity to trim away ideals and cave in to necessity. Don't be frightened by Libertarian idealism but by the lack of it among the standard brand politicians.

A society that puts a premium on individual liberty is one that must forgo an adventuresome foreign policy. There's no need to take seriously Reagan's arm-flapping about government being too big, since the foreign policy he promises us assures that the status quo cannot be altered fundamentally. A society that is permanently mobilized on a semiwar status is unavoidably one dominated, regulated, and run by a highly centralized national government.

The Republican critique of Carter's military expenditures has dwelt on the assertion that we are spending something like five percent of our GNP for war when 10 to 15 percent is needed to keep pace with the Russians. How in hell are you going to get the government off our necks if 15 percent of all the wealth, of everything that is made or done, goes right off the top to the Pentagon, before one pothole is repaired, one social security check is sent, the content of one trash can is collected? Moreover, this kind of effort requires stockpiling and allocating raw materials, allocating economic priorities for war production, and, of course, allocating labor through the Selective Service System.

If we are going to make the Persian Gulf the first line of defense, as both Carter and Reagan want, then there will be no significant tax reduction, no diminution in bureaucracy, no change other than the one we've been experiencing these past 10 years, namely the very gradual but very real downward sloping of most people's standard of living. We can have our two-and-a-half war navy, but what Reagan doesn't realize is that he was telling the truth back in those days when he used to say, as he no longer does, that there is no such thing as a free lunch. We can have 10 more atomic powered aircraft carriers, but the housing industry will stay in the doldrums.

The Libertarian party isn't pacifist; it believes in the armed defense of the United States—and if the phrase means anything, that is defending the 50 states of the Union. It does not mean straddling the globe and laboring to keep up the armed might needed to give law to the planet. Many Libertarians do not understand why

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the European Common Market countries can't defend themselves against the Russians. Taken together they are wealthier, more technologically advanced, and as numerous as we are.

By the same token, as long as the Japanese spend one percent of their gross national product on war, as long as they can invest their ingenuity and inventiveness in civilian production while we spend 10 times as much of our GNP on the perfection of ever more exquisite bombs, we are going to prefer Sonys. It's a great arrangement; we lose money making cannons and they sell us Toyotas. This is not 1950 when we had to underwrite all the expenses. A Libertarian foreign policy would understand mutual security as truly mutual, with all who benefit paying their share of the costs.

The economic benefits in escaping the waste of another couple of trillion dollars are self-evident. But there are other pluses in the Libertarian approach to foreign affairs. In addition to avoiding serio-comedies like the Tehran vaudeville show, a foreign policy stand-down gives us a much better chance at restricting institutions like the CIA. As long as we live in a state of perpetual belligerence, the CIA cannot be tamed, nor can the other civil liberty abuses that arise from national security activities. There are no civil liberties in wartime, so if you keep the society on a wartime footing, you are asking for the buggers to test LSD in your coffee. They can't help it. In war, the state, the collectivity, is more important than you, a mere person, one of the millions whose death is regarded as "an acceptable loss." Compared to that, what's wrong with reading your mail or bugging your phone? That is why to Libertarians no safeguards are practical; the society must be demobilized and that can be done only by an overdue change in policy.

With demobilization and the elimination of the government's intrusive spying comes the possibility of repealing the more irksome, socially restrictive legislation on sex and drugs. It is astonishing that in the same year the *Wall Street Journal* is carrying front page articles noting that marijuana is now a major cash crop in several agricultural states, when the damned stuff is absolutely ubiquitous, none of the major candidates or their parties have the moxie to say, "I bow to the popular will, I respect the right of the individual to break his chromosomes and make an idiot of himself; and, if elected, I will ask Congress to stop smoking it and start legalizing it." Who knows, we might begin to experiment with the repeal of the truancy laws as at length America tries to replace a worthless system of urban public education with one that might teach the children.

A lot of Libertarians have a theological conviction that a free market and fair, unfettered competition will produce an equitable distribution of the goodies; they think that God has so contrived human nature that the unseen hand will turn out to be an equal opportunity employer. Perhaps it will, but you needn't believe it to vote Libertarian. As mentioned above, a rather wide variety of communitarians who have no such belief support the Libertarian party. But, New Harmony aside, the choice this fall is between moving in a free market direction or having the economy planned by the people and interests around Ronald Reagan or those around Jimmy Carter.

We have seen Carter pass his massively retrogressive social security tax increases and capital gains tax decreases in order to manipulate the economy, that is, to make it behave according to plan, albeit a fumbled and poorly constructed one. Reagan makes no bones either about his belief in the use of taxation in order to run the economy as his groups think it should be run. But is either of them to be entrusted with this function? Every time Jimmy Carter talks about a partnership of government, business, labor, and "the public interest," whoever that lady is, I shudder. Likewise when similar phrases tumble, more smoothly I grant you, from the Californian's lips. (Anderson is omitted here since he is a computer composite of Carter/Reagan commissioned by the three television networks and Time, Inc. as a standby political hologram to be used in case disillusionment with the others should grow into a serious public mental health problem.)

If the dear, good Michael Harrington and his fellow socialist castrati in the Democratic party had power, we could debate the merits of planning that is at least intended to be for the people, even if not by them, as against the non-planning of the Libertarians. The Libertarian way is preferable when the choice is intervention in the economy for Chrysler, US Steel, Westinghouse, and many dozens more. And don't be fooled by the excuse that we did it only to save the jobs. They never save the jobs. There is no *quid pro quo*, as the Chrysler affair demonstrates. They got the billion and a half and then laid off the people anyway.

As matters stand now, the election this fall will be determined by whether there are more people who hate Carter than who fear Reagan or vice versa. Whichever way that turns out, your vote, while it may be emotionally satisfying, isn't going to influence anything. The signal you're sending is, "I like it, I love it, I want more of the same."

That's why a Libertarian vote isn't a wasted vote. Mr. Clark is not going to win, but the larger the vote he gets the more powerful the constraints put on the man who does. Fifteen million votes for Clark is 15 million people who say "I'm mad as hell and I won't take it anymore," but who're also saying "you've spent quite enough on bombs, thank you, and you've enriched your friends past all obligation and decency, and now you must stop."

When the bishop of Autun, Talleyrand, observed that politics is the art of the possible, he had in mind the actions of princes and lords, but in a democracy citizens too should practice the arts of possibility. With that in mind, read the Libertarian platform, and accept that you can't agree with all of it. But you can agree

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with a lot of it, particularly the life and death part of it. Compare that to the major platforms which you and I and everyone else can agree with *in toto* since they are so vacuously abstract.

That's why the major power groupings are nonpartisan or bipartisan. Carter or Reagan, or, if they're just too revolting, give Anderson the vote, the swanky people's hero. As long as you vote for one of the three, you're ratifying what's been done, reaffirming it and giving legitimacy to what will follow.

But a vote for Clark is something else again. It carries a message for now and a threat for the future.

Nicholas von Hoffman

Nicholas von Hoffman is a syndicated columnist.

The new Indian offensive.

Righting Old Wrongs

On June 30 of this year, 60,000 Sioux Indians were awarded $122.5 million by the US Supreme Court because in 1877 the US Congress had taken seven million acres in the Black Hills region of South Dakota from the Sioux without fair compensation. Their modern-day descendants based their successful claim on the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie.

Maine's much smaller Indian community met derision when they laid claim in 1972 to two-thirds of the land area of that state, some 12.5 million acres, alleging that it had been taken from their ancestors illegally in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Now, after eight years of court wrangling, Maine has agreed to settle the Indians' claims for $81.5 million, which Maine hopes the US Congress will appropriate. By terms of the tentative settlement announced March 13, 1980, no non-Indian landowner stands to lose monetarily. 300,000 acres will be handed back to the Indians, with the present owners reimbursed at fair market value. Among the many questions raised by the Indians' new legal activism, one of the most painful is: who should be responsible for the costs of righting ancient wrongs?

The Maine tribes volunteered to exempt small homeowners from their suit, and took pains to stress that large paper companies owning vast tracts of uninhabited forest lands were the principal defendants. But the fact that over 300,000 small homeowners could have been bankrupted as a result of these claims has had a devastating effect on the relations of Maine's 4,000 Indians with other Maine residents. Almost as worrisome to non-Indians as the possible economic consequences of the suit were its jurisdictional implications: even if permitted to keep their homes and farms, non-Indians could have found themselves living on reservations where Indians made and enforced their own laws separate from ordinary state jurisdiction. Last year in central Maine a Penobscot Indian, Ronald Francis, was accused of "using a fire . . . some 100 feet from the eastern shore of Debsconeag Dead Water" without permission of the property's present owner or the Maine Forest Service. Francis's legal defense—which succeeded—was that he was not subject to the ordinary restrictions because the fire, said to be for ceremonial purposes, had been set on land claimed by his tribe. In Maine's just-completed negotiations, such jurisdictional questions took even longer to resolve than the land claims themselves.

In recent years, Indians have become increasingly interested in regaining land, and less willing to settle their claims in return for a monetary payment from the federal government. Non-Indians are finding themselves arraigned as defendants in cumbersome court proceedings, even though the Indians' case, as in Maine, ordinarily revolves around alleged inaction by the federal government rather than conscious wrongdoing by the non-Indian defendants. Under present law, most tribal complaints must be lodged against the private non-Indians who are thought to have profited indirectly from the federal government's failures, and the federal government is usually nowhere to be seen—unless and until after years of court maneuvering it may possibly be required, as happened in Maine, to shoulder a long-evaded responsibility. By standing on the sidelines as Indians and non-Indians fight these bitter court battles, the federal government has encouraged an impression that Indian advances can be made only at the expense of non-Indians who did not commit the acts alleged as the basis of the suit.

Tribal Indians can press claims of this sort only because their ancestors were set apart from the normal extension of American law. A lawyer doing a title search for a prospective American home buyer ordinarily will look back through the records of a few decades at most, because under conventional "statutes of limitations" such a lapse of time is sufficient to invalidate a claim automatically. But tribal Indian claims are exempt from such limits because these claims stem from Indian exercise of an independent sovereignty before the United States existed, or at least before the United States extended its effective jurisdiction over their territory.

In one way or another, tribal Indians always have been an exception to the American norm of one law for all. Historically they were viewed first as dangerous small nations and subsequently as an abused and exploited class of unfortunates needing legal protection. In each of these phases they were assigned an exceptional legal status carrying certain rights and privileges along with its limitations. In the first phase, the tribes enjoyed autonomy as small self-governing nations, but also were circumscribed because they

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were at that time a serious military threat. In the second phase, tribal Indians were considered primitive, childlike wards requiring guidance but no longer to be feared as a military menace. The special strength of the tribes' present legal position stems from the carelessness of this shift, which led to a confused acccumulation of inconsistent rights.

The shift was made gradually, but culminated in the decades immediately before and after 1900 when Congress and the Supreme Court combined to allow the destruction of tribal societies, in disregard of treaty promises. Indians were dealt with simply as a class of underprivileged people either left to die in peace or charitably prepared for merger into the body of US citizens. Indian children were enrolled in schools specially designed to turn Indians from their ancestral ways and toward the white mainstream. One by one, Indian reservations were chopped up for sale to whites and many Indians became wanderers, their social structures shattered or in disarray.

A major milestone in this assimilationist phase came in 1924, when all Indians born in the United States were declared US citizens. Four years later Charles Curtis, who had begun life as a Kaw Indian, was elected vice president on the Republican ticket headed by Herbert Hoover. Indians such as Curtis, the athlete Jim Thorpe (Sauk and Fox), and the humorist Will Rogers (Cherokee) seemed to have demonstrated that Indians who desired to achieve success in American society, given half a chance, could hold their own against anyone.

The Roosevelt administration's 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, which fostered the establishment of "constitutional" tribal governments, was only in appearance a rejection of the assimilationist policy. In fact, this Roosevelt initiative was simply a gentler tactic in the campaign to push tribal Indians into mainstream American society. In the Eisenhower years, the federal government's reversion to a hardline approach produced the "termination" era. All special programs and benefits administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs were cut off to numerous groups of Indians because they were said to have learned to fend for themselves in white society. Privileges stemming from tribal status ended when a tribe was "terminated."

Assimilation remained the principal pillar of US Indian policy until the 1960s. Two centuries of federal effort have produced widely varying effects. Some tribal Indians had become so fully assimilated that they had lost all knowledge of their past. Others, such as the Hopi, still live very much as did their ancestors. But it was the wholly or partially deracinated Indians, educated in English-language schools, who first began organizing to articulate tribal goals. This new emphasis on solidarity has led to a focus on long-lost rights and legal distinctions dating from the treaty phase of federal Indian policy. Tribal activism thus has posed questions of public policy quite different from those inherent in, for example, the black civil rights struggle. It seems possible to hope that the long-range result of black solidarity movements will be the opportunity for fuller and less separatist participation by blacks in all sectors of American society. The long-range result of tribal activism, in sharp contrast, could well be some degree of political balkanization of the country, through the emergence of geographically separate enclaves overtly at odds with the government of the United States, as foreshadowed in 1977 in the direct discussions held by the Council of Energy Resource Tribes with OPEC nations on topics of mutual interest.

Tribal Indians sense that they finally may have a strong hand to play. Confined to what were once thought to be remote and forbidding regions, the tribes have, it turns out, important reserves of timber, oil, coal, and uranium. Potentially most important is tribal control of the headwaters of vital reservoirs in the drought-prone west. Tribes today are determined to exploit these assets fully, even if this leads to confrontation with other Americans. Tribal consciousness now has advanced to the point where many Indians think of themselves as holding dual nationalities, with their US citizenship in second place. Tribal Indians, they would argue, share with blacks a historic burden of white racial prejudice and institutional discrimination. But tribal Indians differ from blacks in being legally a quasi-international community dealing with the US government not simply under the ordinary laws of the land but also under treaties. Seen in this way, tribal Indians possess all the legal rights of US citizenship plus additional treaty rights as members of federal Indian tribes. Sophisticated and often highly trained tribal leaders are demanding court enforcement of treaties and other treaty-like undertakings of the federal government, many of which were made long ago and were either forgotten or informally presumed to be "inoperative" when tribal Indians were designated as candidates for assimilation. Tribal Indians claim, in other words, to have the combined legal rights of both historic phases of federal-Indian relations. The catch is, they are at the same time risking attack from two sides. As resentment grows against tribal Indians as welfare recipients, their special status as legal aliens is unlikely to go unchallenged.

In 1977, the American Indian Policy Review Commission, chaired by South Dakota's senator James Abourezk, was established to provide recommendations that would place Indians on a satisfactory footing at the start of the nation's third century. The commission quickly became the focus of much Indian activity and the commission ultimately endorsed the separatist position of today's newly dominant tribal spokesmen. The commission majority's report thus proposed significant federal funding for programs designed to enable tribes to develop within politically and culturally autonomous enclaves. Tribes would have gained control over the spending of sizable federal monies as well as the right to enforce distinctive

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brands of justice on Indians and non-Indians alike within the reservation's bounds. If the commission majority had been heeded, many new tribes and reservations would have been created. The commission majority recommended criteria for federal tribal recognition so informal that even recognition as a tribe by a state, county, township, or local municipality would have been sufficient to compel parallel recognition by the federal government.

But the commission majority evaded the difficult questions. The separateness they envisioned was, for example, depicted simply as a matter of right guaranteed by treaty. The commission dismissed two centuries of federal policy as not only misguided, but wrong as a matter of treaty law. The commission urged that the federal government shift from a directive to a merely advisory role, a shift which they justified in formal terms by broadening the supportive "trustee" concept, whose legal application previously had been restricted to federal responsibility for managing the tribes' economic assets. The commission majority, in short, called on the federal government to pay, but not interfere.

The commission majority also evaded the question of who or what an "Indian" is in late 20th-century America. Today, for example, the federal government still uses blood-quantum criteria to determine tribal membership. The commission majority understandably rejected this, proposing instead tribal control over their own membership rolls. Yet centuries of intermarriage and interaction have produced tens of thousands of individuals for whom "Indian" is a possible, but definitely an optional, ethnic self-identification. When one considers that even of the presently recognized tribes, 83 percent have fewer than 1,000 members, the possibility of legal chaos flowing from the emergence in various parts of the country of new small tribal polities controlled by committed ideologues becomes less than far-fetched. And there is little doubt that vastly enhanced tribal rights could induce in many Americans all sorts of motives to embrace an Indian identity.

The inadequacies of the commission majority's report provoked a vitriolic and unhelpful dissent from the commission's vice chairman, Congressman Lloyd Meeds of Washington State, which effectively derailed the whole project. By leaving an impression that any change would be dangerous, the commission, despite its mammoth effort, may have left things worse than they were. Many specific recommendations of genuine value dealing, for instance, with matters of administration and economic development were overshadowed by the negative reaction to the report's more controversial proposals. The hard questions remain as frustrating as ever. In the absence of congressional guidance, the federal courts try to cope with all the confusion as best they can.

Tribal Indians may choose to disregard what other Americans think of them, insisting on court enforcement of their anomalous rights whatever the cost in goodwill. But many aspects of their legal position are also in conflict with present Indian aspirations. For example, a 1900 Supreme Court decision generally referred to as *Montoya* is considered a vital Indian legal asset. It contains a broad-gauged definition of a tribe that reads, "By a 'tribe' we understand a body of Indians of the same or a similar race, united in a community under one leadership or government and inhabiting a particular though sometimes ill-defined territory." But this legally useful language is excerpted from a thoroughly racist decision, which belittles the "natural infirmities of the Indian character, their fiery temper, impatience of restraint, their mutual jealousies and animosities." *Montoya* states that tribal "governments in their original state were nothing more than a temporary submission to an intellectual or physical superior." Will Indians continue to accept the relevance of such judicial language?

The only sensible long-range solution is a total restructuring of the Indians' legal position which will retain rights acceptable to both tribal Indians and the federal government, and which will explicitly address the different futures to which different Indians aspire. The cry of "Back to the Reservation!"—even an enlarged and enriched reservation—scarcely appeals to all Indians. The requisite shape of the future should be considered directly, and not left to be worked out accidentally in legal wrangles over long-forgotten and/or racially defined rights.

But the fact remains that the Indians' legal position is anomalous and internally inconsistent, a source of difficulty for both Indians and non-Indians. A unilateral effort to change this from outside would raise suspicions that tribal Indians were about to lose their last bastion of autonomy. So long as the material conditions of tribal life remain depressed, any advantages tend to seem sacrosanct. Without question, if the Indians' legal position is to be altered, it must be with wholehearted Indian support.

Such changes will take a long time at best. Meanwhile, legal warfare will continue. Many Indian claims are valid and should be honored. But a serious question of equity seems implicit in the fact that private non-Indian individuals and companies are obliged under current court procedures to bear the financial burden of inquiries into legal rights outside the realm of ordinary legal limitations. In August 1976 in the town of Mashpee on Cape Cod, Indians inspired by events in Maine claimed some 40 square miles of land on the basis of actions, allegedly in violation of federal law, taken by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts more than a century earlier. The only violation with which the several thousand present homeowners said to be illegally trespassing on Indian land could be charged would be the "wrong" of believing the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that they had a right to buy land in the town of Mashpee. Nonetheless, these non-

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Indian individuals were faced in 1976 with the long-range possibility of losing their homes without compensation and with the inescapable financial burden of defending themselves against Indian charges in federal court during a three-year fight (which in this case the non-Indian homeowners ultimately won because the Mashpee Indians were found to be not a tribe as defined by *Montoya*). The alleged transgressor, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, finally agreed to make a small contribution to the non-Indians' legal defense. But the executive and legislative branches of the federal government accepted no formal responsibility whatsoever. President Carter did appoint a mediator, but the mediator ultimately decided to let the courts decide.

Forcing hundreds of thousands of non-Indians to the verge of bankruptcy while the federal courts laboriously decide the merits of complicated Indian charges of federal deregulation is clearly unacceptable. The white farmer in Maine, struggling to make ends meet, knows that he himself didn't harm the Indians six generations back and probably his own ancestors didn't either. And if his great grandfather's grandfather was cheated in a land transaction, the statutes of limitation from which Indian treaties are exempt prevent him from seeking restitution now.

The issue in every Indian claim ultimately is whether the federal government at some time in the past assumed a particular trust responsibility and if so whether the federal government has failed to carry out its trust obligations. Arguably, the federal government should accept in advance liability for any and all court costs and awards stemming from suits about incidents historically more remote than those covered by statutes of limitations. Indians have resolved to set the historical record straight and to insist on proper court enforcement of long ignored Indian rights. But if justice is to be done to both Indian and non-Indian citizens, the federal government will have to accept full responsibility in advance for past government actions and inactions.

Francis G. Hutchins

Francis G. Hutchins is author of *Mashpee, The Story of Cape Cod's Indian Town* (Amarta Press).

Cruising the Democratic convention.

Return of the Ship of Fools

by Alison Lurie

This month a peculiar event took place in New York City. Over 25,000 people from all over the country converged on a large indoor arena and remained there for the best part of four days, ill-housed, ill-fed, and often idiotically clothed. They endured conditions of the sort that drive laboratory rats into psychoses: drastic overcrowding, sudden blasts of noise, glaring lights, uncomfortably high temperatures, and (according to many informants) sexual deprivation resulting from exhaustion and round-the-clock lack of privacy.

The official explanation was that 3,331 of these unfortunate people were in Madison Square Garden to choose a presidential candidate (who, as everyone knew, already had been chosen) that another 10,000 people were there to help them choose; and that the additional 11,000 or 12,000 were on hand to record this imaginary choice and associated occurrences. But even a politically naive observer (yours truly) has to assume that more was going on.

According to some experts, the whole convention was a mistake, an anachronism. In bygone years, they said, before the invention of telephones, airplanes, and primaries, it was necessary or at least useful to bring the national and local leaders of a party together every few years to do business; mere stupidity and the difficulty of stopping any large machine once it has been set in motion have preserved the meaningless ritual of a national convention. I am not convinced by this explanation. An event of this size and silliness does not survive just by accident. There are reasons for it, though not necessarily ones those concerned would admit, even to themselves. Curiosity about these reasons led me, in spite of a long-standing dislike of politics, to spend four days this month in Madison Square Garden. Or, as the official documents called the place, MSG—possibly because, like the food additive favored by cheap Chinese restaurants, it made so many people so manic and hyperactive.

Alison Lurie's most recent novel is *Only Children* (Random House). She teaches English at Cornell University.

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drawing by Tim Moynihan

It was not easy to get into MSG. You had to have two official passes: one, issued by the Secret Service, identified you by name, face, and employer, and looked like a plastic credit card. The other, issued by the Democratic National Committee, resembled US currency. It was of much the same size and shape as a dollar bill, dark green on white with florid Edwardian lettering and the portrait of a dead president. But it was printed on the wrong kind of paper and had a blank backside—play money, obviously.

With these passes on a string around my neck as if I were a dog or a suitcase, I entered MSG, where I was x-rayed, and checked out by 11 different anxious officials in 11 different locations on my way down tunnels and up escalators to the press gallery. Here I could look down into a wide, glaringly lit arena. Since this was Madison Square Garden, I expected something like a prize fight or a circus. (Later on I saw elements of both—clownish figures among the crowd, noisy squabbles, some leading to violence, between supporters of different politicians.) It was clear immediately that there were two factions, each wearing the symbolic colors of its candidate. One lot wore green ribbons and waved grass-green-and-white signs to indicate their leader's rural origins and his presumed born-again purity. The deep but vibrant blue of the opposing faction suggested that their man was sincere, trustworthy ("true blue"), and sympathetic to the common man, blue being the traditional color of work clothes. There were many more green signs than blue ones, but the blue signs were being waved more often and more vigorously.

To get down into the party I had to trade in my dog tags for another pass, good technically for 30 minutes on the floor, actually for much less. It took at least 10 minutes to get down from the press gallery and push your way through the crowd, and another 10 to push your way back. If you did not return in time, your passes were confiscated for the rest of the convention. Certain privileged journalists had permanent floor passes, while others could not get even a temporary one. Though the principle of equality of opportunity was invoked often and reverently from the podium, the convention was rigidly and visibly stratified in terms of seating arrangements and access to facilities. Basically there were three classes, as on an old-time ocean liner—which MSG in some ways resembled, since it contained a disparate assortment of people going somewhere too slowly, many of them suffering from psychic or somatic nausea.

My original assumption had been that the delegates were the important and privileged people at the convention, the first-class passengers. In previous years, maybe; but not this time. After the primaries only a few of them still had some function at MSG and some authority there. These were the successful politicians and the representatives of special interests (in the New York delegation, for instance, people like Shirley Chisholm, Mario Cuomo, and Bella Abzug). They busied themselves renewing alliances, making deals and contacts, and keeping the lesser members of their delegations contented, or at least in their seats—which meant in the steerage.

The delegates crowded together in the bottom of the arena, where the noise and confusion were greatest. The sound equipment at MSG made the proceedings audible first to the TV and radio crews, second to reporters, and third to those spectators whose wealth or political connections had gained them seats in the balcony. Down on the floor most of the speeches were unintelligible. Many delegates couldn't see the speaker on the podium, either because the people in front of them were standing up or because roaming TV crews were in the way. Some members of the South Carolina and Michigan delegations, who were behind the TV tower, saw nothing for four days.

The job of delegate to a national convention is supposed to be a reward for loyal service to the local party, usually as an unpaid volunteer—months and years of making phone calls, tacking up posters, stuffing envelopes, and driving reluctant voters to the polls. The reward is not a material one: most delegates had to pay their own way to New York and their own hotel bills, which averaged $75 a night. They got some free food, usually at breakfast; breakfasts are popular with politicians, who know that they are by far the cheapest form of public hospitality, even better than a cocktail party. All you need is an urn of weak coffee and some sticky buns, which most of your guests won't want anyhow,

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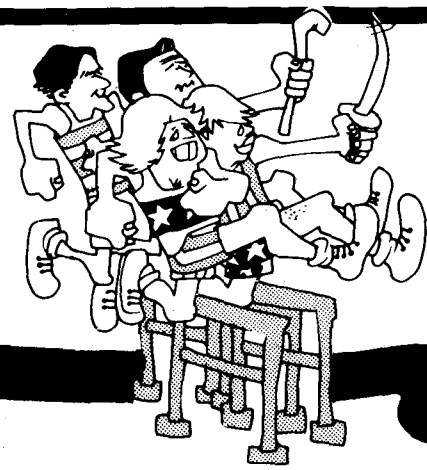

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as it is now 9:30 and they already have eaten.

As time passed the morale of the ordinary delegates declined rapidly. At the start many of them, especially the ones who were at their first convention, were starry-eyed, declaring to journalists that New York was a wonderful city and this the most exciting event of their lives. The crowds, the high prices, the noise, the long lines, the heat (highs were in the 90s) were all part of the excitement. The failure on Monday night to open the convention—in effect, to set aside the decisions of the primaries and give the delegates back some of their power—changed the tone of these interviews. Some delegates began telling reporters that they had been overcharged in restaurants and cursed out by taxi-drivers for 10 percent tips, that there was garbage in the halls of their hotel, that the cardboard hamburgers were overpriced and the coffee tasted like dishwater. Unlike the delegates to the Republican convention, they couldn't buy beer. They had begun to realize that they were paying up to $100 a day to travel steerage, and had nothing to say about where the boat was going. Others, too naive to know what had hit them or too cynical to have expected anything more, settled down to enjoy or endure the party. There wasn't much else they could do, even though it was not a very good party, and the game of Pin the Tail on the Donkey had gone on too long and was rigged in advance.

The real first-class passengers, of course, were the candidates and their entourages, who did not have to wear tags or stand in line for hamburgers, but were smiled on by everyone, driven about in limousines, and fed $100-a-plate banquets. Another privileged group was composed of the prosperous-looking persons who intermittently occupied the balcony seats: retired politicians, large contributors, important press executives, and their friends and families. Even they were stratified, however, according to signs at the entrance, into "honored guests" and plain or non-honored "guests," who had to sit in the upper rows.

The journalists in tourist class were having a fairly good time. They could see and hear the speeches, and nobody was scolding them to stay in their seats and pay attention; they could roam about talking to friends and read their free magazines. When they got hungry there were free pastrami sandwiches in the press bar, where they could watch TV sets tuned to the three major networks and drink beer. And, of course, they were not spending their own money; they were on expense accounts. The best-known commentators and columnists were invited to elegant parties, at which politicians sought them out to praise their latest efforts and make prepared casual comments in the hope that they would be relayed to a larger public.

All this was just the outward sign of what has happened to the media—of its new political power. The podium at MSG was at balcony height; the speakers seldom or never looked down at the delegates below, and when they glanced from side to side it was not to address the "honored guests," but to read the next line on the teleprompters. Mainly, however, they spoke to the TV cameras mounted on a tower directly in front of them in the middle of the arena. This structure—tall, narrow, black, and snaked about with the cables of light and sound equipment—was symbolically as well as physically the center of the convention. What counts today is how a candidate appears in the press and on television; the people who have to be convinced are journalists, not local political leaders or grassroots party hacks.

The idea that our political future might be determined by journalists is not at first unpleasant. After all, most journalists are smarter than politicians and more liberal. They also have better senses of humor, and know how to make even the boring aspects of a campaign lively. In 1976, for instance, a gifted jokester traveling with the Ford entourage noticed a man dressed in a life-size chicken costume at a California shopping center. Inspired, he rented the same costume and began wearing it to Ford's press conferences. The Secret Service made no objection, as long as the chicken wore the correct tags around his neck and followed standard journalistic procedure, raising his wing when he wished to ask a question. Ford, who at the best of times had some difficulty in self-expression, was put off his stride by the appearance of a large white fowl among the other reporters. The chicken and his pals were thus able to obtain a tape recording of the president stumbling in mid-speech and crying out, "the chicken, the chicken." This tape was played frequently, for both the Ford press party and the enjoyment of reporters attached to other candidates.

It might seem like a good thing that the business of politics should be visible on television, that every American who owns a TV should be able to see the Democratic convention or any other current event "as it really is." Unfortunately this is impossible, since when you watch the news you do not see the TV crews themselves—the cameras, lights, sound equipment, and staffs of the national and local networks, the radio interviewers and their technicians, the newspaper and magazine and wire service reporters and photographers, all of them shoving and jostling for a good angle or an exclusive comment.

This crowd of invisible people is present even at very minor, marginally newsworthy events. On the last day of the convention, for instance, there was a celebration of the 45th anniversary of the Social Security program in a small room at the Sheraton Hotel. The space had been cleared of furniture and divided down the center by a red velvet rope. On the ceremonial side of this rope were a dozen formally dressed elderly first-class passengers and a two-by-four-foot cake iced to resemble a Western Union telegram trimmed with red, white, and blue sugar bunting and roses. On our side were two dozen tourist-class journalists, most of them in jeans and t-shirts. The people on the other side

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of the rope, a foot or less away, neither saw nor heard us. And we, though focusing our cameras and microphones on them, made no attempt to communicate. For 35 minutes we stood like two lots of madmen.

But when at last the star of the occasion, Rosalynn Carter, entered the stateroom, everyone sprang to life. The politicians began to smile and to speak with theatrical clarity and animation; the journalists turned on their lights and pointed their microphones at the Western Union cake. Mrs. Carter—a pretty, slight, middle-aged woman in a rather dowdy pink suit and a perfect windblown hairdo, each golden-brown tendril sprayed in place—greeted the elderly persons, who included former senator, now representative Claude Pepper (red-sponge face, self-congratulatory benevolent manner) and Consumer Affairs Adviser Esther Petersen (Nordic saga braids, shrewd expression). As they exchanged speeches I realized that no one in the room was crazy after all; I was simply watching the filming of a TV production.

What was going on at the Democratic convention was even more peculiar than I had thought. It was not a shipboard party, but a media production. MSG was a film studio, the journalists its crew (badly overmanned, but that is traditional in the movie business), and the delegates were the overworked extras, forced to repeat the crowd scene over and over again. That was why so many of them wore ridiculous hats and jumped up and down so hard when the cameras swung their way; they hoped to get chosen for a bit part, or at least to be recognized by their friends back home. As for the stars of the production and the supporting cast, they were of course the politicians and their families. Together all these people were making a film about an ocean voyage (*Sink the Titanic?*) which they hoped would get high ratings, attract rich sponsors, and lead to a sequel in 1984.

When politicians become actors, it is only natural for actors to become politicians, and those of us who are not Republicans should stop being surprised at the prospect of a film-star president, even it if is reasonable for us to dread it. Jimmy Carter, who was elected four years ago partly because he looked better on the small screen than his opponent, also wants us to dread this prospect. His acceptance speech warned the audience against a "fantasy world . . . a make-believe world of good guys and bad guys." Though he didn't mention the movies, or any specific former Hollywood good guy, his meaning was clear.

Unfortunately, to anyone in the MSG film studio, Carter did not come across as a moral crusader against make-believe, but merely as a featured actor in one of those films that pretend to criticize the film industry. He was caught in his own metaphor, as sometimes happens in real life as well as in films. It may have been hard to get into MSG, just as it is hard to get into the movies, but it can be a lot harder, perhaps in the long run impossible, to get out.

Why the Poles are rebelling.

The Workers' Discontented State

by Abraham Brumberg

For the fourth time in less than three decades the communist government of Poland is confronted by a dramatic challenge to its authority by the very class it claims to represent—the industrial proletariat. Twenty-four years ago, in June 1956, thousands of workers took to the streets of Poznan to demand higher pay and better working conditions. Fifty people were killed and hundreds of workers were dragged off to jail. In December 1970 a sudden increase in food prices provoked a series of massive demonstrations in the Baltic ports and in Szczecin; the police opened fire on the workers, causing nearly 200 casualties. Wladyslaw Gomulka, the man who took over in October 1956, fell from power as a result, and his replacement, Edward Gierek, rescinded the price increases. Barely six years later, in June 1976, Gierek himself introduced precipitous price increases, and was faced by an uprising even more widespread (though less bloody) than that faced by his predecessor. And now, four years later, Poland is in the grip of what is no doubt the most spectacular demonstration of worker discontent yet.

By mid-July, three weeks after more than half the work force at the Ursus tractor plant near Warsaw laid down their tools in response to a steep increase in market meat prices, 68 enterprises and factories were at a standstill. Some of the workers, including railway

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men, streetcar operators, garbage collectors, and textile workers at shipyards and other factories in the Baltic area, went out on strike. As of this writing, more than 100,000 workers, represented by democratically elected "strike committees," are locked with the authorities in a struggle whose outcome is neither predictable nor in the immediate offing.

While the direct reasons behind all these confrontations of the past 25 years clearly have been economic, workers' demands have been of a consistently political nature. In the latest unrest in Gdansk, workers' demands include abolition of censorship, establishment of free trade unions, and full freedom for the Catholic church.

Yet the present situation is in some respects unprecedented. In June 1956, despite the tremors of "deStalinization" that began in 1954 and grew progressively stronger after Khrushchev's speech denouncing Stalin in February 1956, the government had no compunctions about dealing summarily with its opponents. In 1968, when hundreds of intellectuals and students demonstrated for greater freedom of expression, the government was able to incite the workers against "enemies of socialism" and "Zionists" who were bent on "depriving the working class of its hard-earned benefits." Two years later, when it was the workers' turn to protest, they found themselves isolated, which accounted for both the inchoate violence of the protesters and the wanton brutalities of the government. Things were different in 1976, as indicated by the fact that the authorities refrained from shootings and massacres, eventually releasing all the workers who were arrested. And they are surely altogether different now: instead of angry hordes parading the streets and setting party headquarters on fire, the workers are proceeding with calm and self-confidence, electing representatives and forcing the government to negotiate with them. The authorities in turn also have taken a remarkably moderate and conciliatory line, at least thus far. What accounts for this extraordinary behavior by both contending parties?

The most important factor is a genuine rapport between the workers and the rest of the population, and the role played in this process by the organized movement of political opposition to the government. Poland was never like Czechoslovakia or the Soviet Union, and always has enjoyed a certain pluralism, despite the regime's valiant efforts to confine and dilute it. Earlier the authorities usually had succeeded in isolating the various "pressure groups" by playing off one against the other—the intellectuals against the workers, the workers against the peasants. The Catholic hierarchy, while exerting enormous influence on the devout population, for many years had been interested primarily in defending its own institutional rights and prerogatives.

In June 1976, however, something new emerged on the scene: a group of intellectuals, many of them former Communists and Socialists, but also including a number of liberal Catholic laymen and people of a generally liberal and democratic persuasion, called the Committee for the Defense of the Workers, or KOR. KOR's immediate aim was to provide financial, legal, and moral support for the hundreds of workers arrested during the riots. Its success, remarkable in the short run, proved even more impressive over time. It was mostly people directly associated with KOR or generally sympathetic to it that founded numerous papers, bulletins, literary journals, and unofficial book publishers which the authorities found increasingly difficult to suppress. Under the direct influence of KOR, the Society of Educational Courses, with its offshoot the "Flying University," came into being; despite continued reprisals by the authorities it has succeeded in organizing lectures and even systematic courses throughout the country (in history, political science, sociology, literature), thus offering Polish students what is in effect an alternate, or at least supplementary, educational system, free from the party's crippling ideological and political controls. It was KOR that encouraged—directly or obliquely—the formation of various independent student groups, and eventually also the so-called "Peasant Self-Defense Committees," which challenged the government's continuous and insidious efforts to penalize the individual peasant and force him to join state and collective farms (comprising only 20 percent of the entire agricultural population).

But most relevant to the current situation in Poland has been the sense of solidarity between the intellectuals and workers, fashioned by KOR through two major instruments—the creation of various "free trade union groups" and the newspaper *Robotnik* (the Worker), a small, two-page mimeographed sheet that is distributed in thousands of copies in factories and plans.

Judging by the events of the past few weeks, all these efforts have borne astonishing fruits. KOR has been a clearinghouse and source of information on the industrial strikes since July 2; it has acted as the unofficial spokesman for the thousands of strikers. Jacek Kuron, one of the most prestigious representatives of KOR, told the German weekly *Der Spiegel* (August 4, 1980) that *Robotnik* and KOR in general have stressed the need "to struggle for one's rights in the plants rather than in the streets." In July and August the workers have not taken to the streets, but have tried to negotiate with the authorities in the firm yet noninflammatory fashion he ascribed—with considerable justification—to KOR's appeal of early July, urging the workers, "desist from provoking the state organs." The Catholic church also has come out openly in defense of workers' rights, an end to censorship, more rational industrial and agricultural policies, respect for human rights, and other planks of the programmatic platforms of KOR and other dissident groups.

There is also evidence that within the party, more

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and more critical voices are being heard. The *Washington Post*'s Michael Dobbs reported on August 19 that Klemens Gniech, the director of the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk—stronghold of the current strike on the Baltic—"criticized government policies over the past decade for leading the country into its present crisis." There have been reports in the unofficial press about party meetings in which criticism of the government has been bitter and far-reaching.

In a July 5 article, Mieczyslaw Rakowski, editor of the weekly *Polityka* and a Central Committee member with liberal proclivities, bluntly criticized the government for "manipulating statistics," for failing to treat the workers with a minimal amount of respect, and for adopting a "mechanism of management" that functions incorrectly and "at times offends the elementary principles of common sense."

Another recent illustration of the ferment within the party is provided by a document, entitled "How to Get Out of It," published last May under the auspices of a short-lived discussion club called Experience and the Future. It summarizes and distills the views of about 140 prominent scientists, scholars, industrial managers, lawyers, and so on, among them 51 members of the Communist party. Coming from a group of prestigious people who are at pains to declare their loyalty to the system and who merely wish to "improve it," the specific grievances and criticisms are positively scathing, and the prescriptions drastic. Because of misguided party policies, the document declares, political institutions have decayed, the economy has deteriorated catastrophically, social problems (corruption, alcoholism, work discipline) have been mounting, the educational system has caused "tension among the young people which has reached crisis proportions," social inequalities (between high party officials and the rest of the population) have grown, and the population as a whole has come to regard the authorities with suspicion and contempt.

The specific remedies advocated by this document illustrate the remarkable coherence of the views of the disparate elements of the political opposition in Poland. Whatever their differences, none of the large groupings demands the dismantling of the communist system, or the institution of a multi-party system, or, say, withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact—all actions which in the past brought Soviet troops streaming into Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

The opposition demands that the party stop dealing in lies, half-truths, and deceptions, and that it do whatever possible to win the confidence of the people; that it allow for greater participation of society in public life (i.e., genuine elections, albeit within the context of a single ticket); that workers be allowed to elect their own representatives to the trade unions that are supposed to speak for them; that censorship be cut back or eliminated altogether (except for restrictions on such matters as military secrets)—in short, that within the framework of the existing political order, and while remaining ("for the foreseeable future") allied to the Soviet Union, the party allow and indeed encourage a true measure of political pluralism.

Hardly anyone in Poland thinks that the enactment of these measures is going to solve the country's horrendous economic problems—the massive foreign debt ($20 billion), the endemic food shortages, the decline of productivity, the catastrophic balance of payments, the disastrous over-investment in heavy industry instituted by Gierek in the early 1970s, the egregious export-import ratio. Nor is there any doubt that the Polish population must tighten its belt, and that wage increases are no long-term answer. But the opposition is united in the conviction that only a genuine democratization, only an end to official cant, only a new atmosphere of trust and confidence between the rulers and the ruled will create the necessary preconditions for tackling and solving these problems. For the first time in the history of "people's Poland," the workers feel that the people are indeed behind them, and that their adversary is forced to negotiate with them on an equal basis, temporize, compromise, and retreat.

But retreat how far, and at what cost? There is always the danger that the appetite will grow with the eating, that demands will be made that the party won't be able to meet without relinquishing its power. Gierek's warning that "only a socialist Poland can be a free and independent state with an inviolable frontier," and that "actions that are aimed against the basic foundations of the socialist system will not be tolerated," is the kind of blackmail that the party consistently has used to justify its reluctance to grant any real concessions to its critics. But the workers in Gdansk and elsewhere have not made demands comparable to those of the "Czech reformers" in 1968, or announced policies similar to those of Hungarian communist leader Imre Nagy in November 1956. It is difficult to imagine that after the relatively peaceful events of the past seven weeks the authorities would either decide to crack down with force, thus possibly risking the unmitigated humiliation of seeing its own armed forces throwing in their lot with the workers, or appeal for military assistance from Moscow, thus plunging the whole country into a fearful bloodbath. Nor, for obvious reasons, is the Soviet Union anxious to court such a development. Provided the workers do not get carried away by their successes (among which is the establishment, for the first time in a communist country, of the mechanism for collective bargaining) and provided, too, that the party can muster the necessary wisdom and courage for dialectical compromise, some resolution of the conflict could be worked out. But whether the party is willing to enter into this kind of contract, or whether, in the hope of fragmenting the ranks of the workers, it continues to refuse to negotiate with them, thus indeed risking a violent explosion, only time will tell.

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Texas, Titanic, and Time-Travel

By now, everyone who can care knows about the provenance of *Honeysuckle Rose*, but I didn't know when I went to see it. The picture started. It's about a country-music band in Texas, but the credits said it was based on a story by two Swedes, Gösta Stevens and Gustaf Molander, the latter a famous old director. Puzzling. Then, about 20 minutes along, the puzzle cleared. *Honeysuckle Rose* is a re-make of *Intermezzo*, which was done in Hollywood in 1939 with Ingrid Bergman and Leslie Howard and which was itself a re-make of the *Intermezzo* that Bergman had made in Sweden in 1936, directed by Molander. The Swedish film had brought her to David O. Selznick's notice. He signed her, bought the Swedish version, and re-made it for her American debut. (He produced; Gregory Ratoff directed.) It launched her.

I doubt that *Honeysuckle Rose* will do as much for Amy Irving who plays (the equivalent of) the Bergman part. I doubt that much can be done for Irving in any case. The daughter of the late Jules Irving, who once ran the Vivian Beaumont Theater in New York, and of Priscilla Pointer, who plays her mother here, Irving has already been seen conspicuously, if not impressively, in *The Fury*. She's a pretty girl who has acquired some fundamental naturalistic ease and, in the italicized moments, can make the required faces; but it's all facsimile, not even faintly moving. And she has none of what still has to be called personality, the combination of attraction and command with a hint of sub-surface complication that can make us watch non-actors with some pleasure.

The older married man here who has an affair with her, the transformed (oh, boy) Leslie Howard part, is the country musician Willie Nelson, who comes as close to being literally wooden as is humanly possible. He has no face, just two nice eyes and some whiskers, and his acting is retrogressive: as he approaches, he seems to be moving backward. The sweep of passion, supposedly irresistible, as played by Irving and Nelson, is a wonder of the ludicrous.

Nelson's wife is Dyan Cannon, overdecked with long blonde ringlets and about as Texan as Bel Air. But on those few occasions when we can actually see her face amidst the foliage, she's so much more lively and sexy than Irving that her husband's wanderings seem perverse.

Instead of the famous (male) violinist who goes on tour with a new young (female) accompanist, the man is now the leader of a country-music group and she, daughter of a former member of the group, is a guitarist who joins up to fill a three-week stint in an emergency, traveling with the band on its bus. (By the way, I couldn't understand the emergency musically. If her guitar had been missing from their over-amplified performances, would the audience's ear have noticed?) In the first two versions of the film, it was a romance of rue, of bad timing and the narrow choices of life. If the lovers had been of the same age and he hadn't been happily married already, they could have been happily married together. At least at a magazine-romance level, we felt some tug of loss through destiny. No touch of this in *Honeysuckle Rose*. The pair have an affair, then are brought to their senses. She apologizes to his wife and her father; the man apologizes to his wife, then has a good-ol'-boy tussle with the girl's father that ends in a drink-out. No kind of heart-tug because none of the characters is susceptible of poignancy. Two people have a fling and stop when reproved.

Sydney Pollack, who directed *The Way We Were* and *The Electric Horseman*, produced this one; the director was Jerry Schatzberg, whose best previous work was *The Seduction of Joe Tynan*. The film laps along in the creamy, expensive, characterless manner of most big American films these days. The cinematographer is Robby Müller, who has done all of Wim Wenders's films, who obviously shares the postwar German adoration of American pop culture, and who sees Texas with wide but discerning eyes. Nice cross-pollinating. A film about Texas life, based on a Swedish story, shot by a German.

Many a time, on late-night TV or elsewhere, I see a bit of an old film—1930s or earlier—with a plot so ridiculous that I feel smug. Things may be bad nowadays (and what do I mean by "may be"?), we trim serious ideas, cheat and exaggerate and trivialize, but nobody would make a film on such a premise any more, I think. Then come two lulus like *Raise the Titanic* and *The Final Countdown*, immense productions so stupid from the very nubbin of the original idea that it's hard to understand how big businessmen interested in bucks—leave taste out of it—could hope to make bucks from them.

Both of them deal "factually" with non-fact. *Raise the Titanic* is about raising the *Titanic*. (The one good shot is when the ship finally breaks to the surface.) In reality the *Titanic* hasn't yet even been located, but here they float it and bring it to New York. The gimmick might fit in the same category as King Kong climbing NY skyscrapers if the plot weren't the worst kind of national-security

Films Worth Seeing

Airplane! Gags. Funny. (Mostly.) Spoof of an airplane-disaster picture, but more than. Also mocks taboos, and freedom from.

Fame. When the performers are performing, it's dynamite. Luckily, that's around half the time. The rest—their lives at the High School of Performing Arts in NYC—is dud.

The Great Santini. The title doesn't tell you it's about a Marine pilot's troubles with his family. The cast is fine, though Robert Duvall is too street-tough; the script is patchwork. A total of about an hour of father-son tussle-love is good.

Rough Cut. Diamond thieves. A rhinestone comedy, but Burt Reynolds and David Niven do a lot to keep it sparkling.

SK

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hugger-mugger hokum and if the dialogue were grave when serious and amusing when funny, instead of the other way round. The stars are names-down-the-list. Excepting possibly Jason Robards, I can't believe that the leading roles were accepted by the producers' first choices. (No wonder.) For instance, Richard Jordan as a swashbuckling ex-navy captain—preferred over Robert Redford or Steve McQueen? I'm not saying that a lesser draw than Redford or McQueen, or a complete unknown, couldn't be good in the role; I am saying that Jordan is pitiful and *looks* like desperation casting. The only agreeable performer is Anne Archer, as a Washington reporter who used to sleep with Jordan and now sleeps with someone else, but her role is offensively written.

Then there's *The Final Countdown*—a title as pointless as the picture, by the way. The ad copy tells enough: "On December 7th, 1980 the nuclear carrier *USS Nimitz* disappeared in the Pacific . . . and reappeared December 7th, 1941 . . . off Pearl Harbor." Courtesy of a wild electrical storm that whirled the ship back almost 40 years.

You know in advance that there's going to be a lot of dialogue like: "This is crazy." "What's going on around here?" "Wait a minute, let's take this one step at a time." "You mean to say that we're . . . we're. . . ." And so on. But all one asks from an SF idea like this—fantasy, really, not science fiction—is that it be used cleverly to some purpose: pop entertainment, pop metaphysics, pop historical reflection, pop moralism, pop *something*. All that happens here is that the *Nimitz* goes back in time, has a chance to stop the Japanese fleet before Pearl Harbor, doesn't, and comes back to the present. A senator who disappeared back in 1940 disappears back there once again. (We're supposed to believe that this joker, fat and pampered, had been out in mid-Pacific in a 50-foot boat.) His female assistant and a naval commander survive together in an undisclosed way, which suits me. There's no fun in the time-shuttling and no smattering of idea.

Kirk Douglas is the ship's captain, phony from Moment One. Martin Sheen of *Apocalypse Now* is in this Apocalypse Then, and no more forceful, though his part is less pretentious. Some of the footage shot by Victor J. Kemper is crisp. It made me think that there might be a lively film about life on such a ship, an updated version of the navy pictures we got during World War II, which exploited all the new hardware and investigated present-day military/naval behavior.

Punishing the liberated woman.

Soft-Porn Culture

by Ann Douglas

Popular culture is out to get the so-called liberated woman. Mass culture increasingly specializes in dominance games, fantasies in which women lose and men win. It is important that such fantasies are popular among women as well as among men, and that they are fantasies.

Women Against Pornography is a New York-based group that offers guided tours of 42nd Street to any woman who wants to see what usually only men see: peep shows, masturbation booths, porn shops featuring leather goods, dildos, and dozens of periodicals with titles like *Obedience and Dominance*, *Hot-Assed Divorcees*, and *Pain*, as well as unauthored paperbacks belonging to the Slave Woman Series or Bestselling Bookline called *Club Sadistic*, *Slave to Anal Sex*, *Pain Dungeon*, and *Tortured Beauty*. Within the pages of such magazines and books, a woman can learn what some deem fit punishment for her claims to independence: "Bondage the Answer to Women's Lib" reads a caption in *Obedience and Dominance* above three photographs of women tied, gagged, chained, and collared. Hard porn's law, to pervert Descartes, runs: "I hurt you, therefore I exist." The title of one of the books in Bestselling Bookline, *Shamed Virgin*, could be the title for them all.

Forty-Second Street looks like a freak show. It isn't. What one finds there is disturbingly evident, if more discreetly packaged, in popular entertainment dealing with sex roles and mass-market paperback love stories. Too often they are covert carriers of porn's message for women: "Don't travel alone"; "men can't stand it"; "men won't let you get away with it." The story such cultural fare purveys is one in which the strong woman seldom fares well, or if she does, it is at a man's expense, and thus at her own.

Among these cautionary fables for women are the new, often highly acclaimed, "tea and sympathy" films which dramatize the sad plight of the male in a world of liberated women: Blake Edwards's *Ten*, Alan Pakula's *Starting Over*, and the classic of the genre to date, Robert Benton's *Kramer vs. Kramer*. These films are not female "weepies," nor male-bonding films. They are male weepies. They compensate by lavish over-interest in their heroes' plights and by forced happy finales for their underlying less happy theme. Men are in big trouble: they don't know who they are or what they want. The hero of this new genre is deciding between the glamor of excitement and success, and the camaraderie of comedy that will enable him to get through his various life crises (the current substitutes for plot). He chooses the latter. But what about the woman in the case?

Women in these films shift meaning and character drastically in their frantic scramble to regroup more or less tidily around the male hero's confused emotional and narrative needs. In *Kramer vs. Kramer*, Meryl Streep supposedly has a "case," but it is a wildly incoherent one. She rightly leaves a tyrannical husband one year and unjustly tries to separate a sensitive loving man (the same guy) from their son the next. At the start of the film Streep abandons her child because she doubts her ability to be good for him; at the close, she gives her son up again, for pretty much the same reason. And this, despite (or because of?) a career which has taken off with magical ease in a mere 15 months of freedom, therapy, and California. Low self-esteem is Streep's fate whatever she does. Isn't it odd that Meryl Streep, with

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her strong features and air of independent intelligence, the media-proclaimed "actress of the 1980s," in all but one of her four recent roles (*Kramer, Manhattan, The Seduction of Joe Tynan*) has played women who either can't keep their men or brutally reject them? Isn't it odd that she, like the hard-core heroine, is either haughty or humiliated?

The message, again, is "stay home," and women don't need to go to the movies to get it. Soft-core pornography, specifically designed for women who would not frequent 42nd Street for any purpose, nor even attend movies regularly, is flourishing. One subset of soft porn, the Harlequin Romances, particularly demands attention. Their rise to popularity has been phenomenal. A British Canadian venture, Harlequins sold 14,000 copies in 1966 and somewhere over 50 million in 1979. Once addicted, you will be maintained in your habit; you can buy them at supermarkets and drugstores and airports and train stations; you can even become a Harlequin member and receive 12 Harlequins a month for wonderfully little money. The timing of the Harlequins' prodigious success has coincided exactly with the appearance and spread of the women's movement, and much of its increasingly anti-feminist content reflects this symbiotic relationship. A Harlequin heroine gives up a job more easily than her maidenhead; better yet, she abandons them simultaneously. As in male weepies and hard porn, female identities are obligingly so much tinder in the crucible in which male ego is to be reforged.

Harlequins focus on one aspect of female experience, courtship: not courtship in the Jane Austen style with its intricate processes of choice, but coupling in the wary primitive modes of animal mating. The Harlequin heroine is a young girl; on rare occasions, she may be as old as 25 or 26, but she has seldom enjoyed more than a few kisses from the opposite sex. She is not a beauty, nor is she talented, nor invariably good-tempered. She is a candidate for subduing, and for gratitude. If she is good-looking and competent, her gifts are but provocations, we quickly learn, to brutal destiny. As the story opens, the heroine has usually lost a parent, a home, or both, making her especially vulnerable. The hero is always the heroine's superior, older, handsome in a predatory way, dressed in stunning clothes, lord of at least a plantation and sometimes head of a corporation. The heroine, usually an immigrant from another less modern

culture to the energized, bewildering terrain of the male, is literally in his power: he is often her boss or temporary guardian. Her inevitable loss of control constitutes the Harlequin plot. The Harlequins—and herein lies their power—crudely elaborate the physiological and psychological condition of girls in love, dilated and contracted by the uncertainties of passion.

The Harlequins last their stipulated 180-odd pages because the main protagonists are locked in a duel of sexual stupidity. Both are emotional illiterates. He is usually too angry, she too scared, to say anything honest about how they feel. At least half the heroine's energies are absorbed in learning the language of the male's land: how to ride, how to drive a jeep, how to placate hostile or lecherous peers and superiors on the job. Dim to begin with, the heroine has few female friends to bolster her intelligence, to help her put the hero in perspective. Those she does have, perhaps a sister of the hero, or a worker in his office, are at least as impressed by the hero as she is. Little wonder that the heroine alternates between terrified silence and ill-timed protests.

The hero is an arrogant, glamorous figure who travels alone. Some woman, a first wife or his mother, has hurt him, and for this he holds the opposite sex in permanent suspicion. The Harlequin girl must love the Harlequin man no matter how viciously he treats her; he can despise and abuse her (and other women) on the grounds that one woman once ill-treated him. The logic is startling, the fantasy obvious: women need men pitifully more than men need them; they can't afford such sweeping judgments nor stand such sexual exile. In this totally anti-feminist world, the Harlequin heroine is fighting for the status of an exception; she neither wins nor wants the vindication of her sex: clearly a lost cause.

On the scene, as a warning to the heroine and an explanation for the hero's sadism, we usually find the good-looking older single woman. Her wickedness is suggested by the mere fact that she is the hero's own age (32 to 39). To be coeval, to retain her attractiveness without the cosmetic of male domination, is to be tainted, if not willfully depraved. Vain, grasping, materialistic, she is seldom committed to being a wife and never interested in motherhood; indeed, sex itself is often repulsive to her.

The crime of the older woman is her failure to be fully sexually dependent. Of this sin the heroine, despite a superficial pertness, is truly blameless. She vibrates helplessly to the hero's punitive mood swings: his hostile silences punctuated by sardonic put-downs and devouring, punishing kisses leave blood on her lips and awe for male authority in her heart. Occasional quixotic expressions of tenderness vanish inexplicably without a trace, except the heroine's yearning for more. The hero awakens her sexually long before he says he loves her and her response is comparable to an earthquake. The hero's proximity alone can send the blood pounding through her veins, make her hands tremble, deprive her of speech and reason. His touch devastates. She

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can only cling, like a drowning woman to a spar, to the notion that she must not "give in" to the hero until he says he loves her. "Not like this" is the saving thought that wrenches many (though not all) Harlequin girls from the bruising penultimate embraces of the men they love.

It is arguable that the heroine is fighting for woman's ancient right to be loved where she is willing to be possessed. She is at heart "old-fashioned" in every way, often a fine little cook, a plucky apprentice (but of course no more) to masculine sports and interests, the product of a traditional home, someone who usually longs for children above all else. The encouragement to take sex more freely, more casually, that "Women's Lib" (as it is always called in the Harlequins) seems to offer women, the Harlequins imply, may strip an unsuspecting girl of her surest source of power. If the Harlequin heroine, Miss Monogamy herself, suffers what Freud called sexual "thralldom," she also has the not inconsiderable power of the voluntarily enslaved. Her dependency, her worldly innocence—and a catastrophe or two—force crude conversation, and voilà! she wins love and a proposal of marriage.

Yet it is difficult to see the Harlequins as picking up on any feminine struggle—even the ancient battle to be loved as well as desired—ignored by the women's movement. The emotional force of current Harlequin Romances comes from the brute energy of the male and the over-responsiveness of the female. The heroine's sexual holding out is a dubious business at best. There is a sizable minority of recent Harlequins in which the male rejects the virgin's eager offer to go to bed with him. In Margaret Parrageter's *Only You* (September 1979), the virginal heroine, Sara Shaw, is totally receptive to Mark Fenwick's skillful kisses even though they leave her lips "so bruised" that she can only say (of all things) "thank you," even though she realizes they are merely a substitute for the "whip" he would have used on her a century earlier. On a weekend at his isolated country place, her rapidly intensifying sexual "addiction" finally reduces her to ignominy. He comes to her room, starts to make mad love to her, curses and breaks off tantalizingly (as Harlequin heroes are apt to do). She holds out "her thin young arms," and pleads "Mark, please!" Mark, for his own reasons, at this time totally unknown to reader and heroine, ruthlessly rejects her: "God, you've all the makings of a proper little bitch, haven't you?" he says as he leaves her bedroom, adding savagely from the door, "Don't imagine I ever loved you." Any 42nd Streeter would recognize her: another "Shamed Virgin."

When the heroine does hold out successfully, she prolongs the male's sadism as surely as her virginity. Since she always responds fiercely to his preliminary lovemaking, when she tears herself away at the belated command of her conscience, he can think of her as a "tease" and lessen what little mercy he had apportioned her. His confession of vulnerability and his protestations of love usually occupy only the last two pages of the story, and he quickly reasserts his authority in his new role as husband-to-be. In Rose Elver's *Golden Apples* (July 1978), the hero (compared at one point to Nero) fires Vere, his prospective bride, from his ad agency by way of proposal, and announces, "I'm not having my wife working in the agency and no arguments, Vere." "No arguments about *that*," she replies. *Finis.*

The Harlequins are porn softened to fit the needs of female emotionality. They are located inside the female consciousness, but so are most current hard-porn (heterosexual) stories and magazines; so, for that matter, are the Marquis de Sade's *Justine* and John Cleland's *Fanny Hill*. Female, not male, consciousness is the most satisfactory repository and register for the forced acknowledgment of male power. The Harlequin heroines initially resist domination, but so do the hard-core heroines. Breaking down female antagonism is half the fun.

The Harlequin hero is well equipped for his special sport. He has strong, even "razor" sharp features, a penchant for "whip cord" trousers, he likes neck "chains," and he is as cruelly omnipotent as his hard-core counterpart. When he "presses" the heroine's usually "petite" body to his own, his "contours," to use the Harlequin's euphemism, are always bruisingly "hard." His behavior is not just moody; it occasionally approaches the homicidal. In Elizabeth Graham's *Man From Down Under* (June 1979), the hero almost chokes the heroine to death—lest she make a scene that will disturb her sick father! It is a strange world we're in: the heroine doesn't think to tell her doting parents about the hero's killer impulses; she only desires him the more. In Charlotte Lamb's *Love is a Frenzy* (January 1980), Mark, dressed in tight black jeans and shirt, embraces

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Rachel: "His hands shot out and imprisoned her face, tightening until they were crushing her bones like matchwood. 'I could like hurting you, Rachel,'" he tells her.

Like hard-core porn and the male weepies, Harlequins are dramas of dependency. Dependency, or a shifting series of dependencies, becomes the *modus vivendi* of a person or a culture when the structure of the self in its more traditional Freudian incarnation has vastly weakened or collapsed. The Harlequin heroine guarantees the continuance of her initial youthful ignorance of life by her avid willingness to let the first chance at sexual bondage do the work experience is usually asked to accomplish. The idea of "growing up," of maturation, is the one most taboo in porn, and this taboo constitutes one of its great attractions. The Harlequin heroine averts the pain of not knowing who she is by courting the (only) apparently greater pain of addicting herself to a powerful and totally unknown male. He, in turn, prolongs her retardation in order to go on being his inscrutable self. They "torment" each other—a favored Harlequin word—by their apparently incommunicable love into facsimiles of the selves neither possesses.

The complete sexual stereotyping of soft and hard porn handily solves the confusion rampant in the more self-conscious works of Edwards, Benton, and Pakula. But in soft porn, hard porn, and male weepies alike, the male ego is preferred, protected, stabilized. In the world of shifting sexual identities in current films, female strength must be siphoned to the male or shown run amok; in the legends of hard porn, feminine self-reliance must be brutalized and broken; in the soft-porn fantasies of the Harlequins, woman's independence is made horrifically unattractive and unrewarding, her dependence presented as synonymous with excitement.

Admittedly incomplete surveys of readers suggest that Harlequins, concerned exclusively with the defloration and marriage of young girls, are consumed not only by schoolgirls but by "normal," active women in their 30s, 40s, and 50s. If true, this statistic hardly assures us that the Harlequins are harmless ("They must be all right if grown up middle-class women like them"), but provokes instead serious concern for their women readers. How can they tolerate or require so extraordinary a disjuncture between their lives and their fantasies? Probably the Harlequins are not written by men, although the bland WASP noms-de-plumes of the supposed authors tell us nothing; but the women who couldn't thrill to male nudity in *Playgirl* are enjoying the titillation of seeing themselves, not necessarily as they are, but as some men would like to see them: illogical, innocent, magnetized by male sexuality and brutality. It is a frightening measure of the still patriarchal quality of our culture that many women of all ages co-sponsor male fantasies about themselves and enjoy peep-shows into masculine myths about their sexuality as the surest means of self-induced excitation.

If these cultural phenomena constitute a backlash against the independent woman, it is an attack on an opponent felt as formidable. The voices of the opposition cannot drown out the refrain forming perhaps for the first time in the hearts of countless American women and perhaps of many American men: it is better today to be born female than male. The opportunities are at least new, the problems still interesting. Recently, male scholars and observers have commented profusely on modern man's post-Freudian destabilized "narcissistic" ego, what could be called the transfusion self. Yet one can wonder—the male observers and scholars usually do not—whether their observations hold equally true for the female psyche. Might it not be closer than the male's to the older Freudian ego model with its implications of a coherent narrative of the self and a predictable dynamic of conflict?

Women's best self-expression surely bears more affinities to Victorian precedents than does that of men. Non-porn cultural fare, of varying worth and popularity, more consonant with feminine and human as well as feminist needs than porn, is also burgeoning, if less rapidly. TV movies such as last year's "Like Mom, Like Me," contemporary films like Paul Mazursky's *An Unmarried Woman*, Adrian Lyne's provocative *Foxes*, Claudia Weill's *Girl Friends*, Fred Zinneman's *Julia*, Hal Ashby's *Coming Home*, Herbert Ross's *The Turning Point*, Ingmar Bergman's *Autumn Sonata*, Richard Brook's *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*, the important works of authors like Adrienne Rich, Marge Piercy, Gail Godwin, Marilyn French, Joan Didion, Margaret Atwood, Doris Lessing, and Margaret Drabble offer the first sometimes awkward, sometimes brilliant, strangely moving vignettes of women liking women. They suggest that power passes down the matriarchal line as surely as it does down the patriarchal line. They dramatize and detail portions of female experience—aging, so-called sexual abnormality, the long stretches of married life, maternity, the crisis of divorce—seldom before treated as subject matter.

In harvesting the material generated by the new freedom and the new roles open to their sex, women are able to regenerate, free from any effective charges of anachronism, the more traditional forms, like the novel, the memoir, and the narrative, whether in film or fiction, treated as passé by their male contemporaries. Because these forms are dependent for vitality on the presence of genuine social change, women, implicated willy-nilly in such change, need not abandon or violently reorder their structure as men, whose status is currently more static, apparently must. Women are able to use forms, in other words, that have long proved both their immense popularity in the marketplace and their place in the halls of artistic fame. Today women are creating an art, with all its shortcomings, genuinely their own, an art both traditional and bold, an art that contrasts with, more readily than it supplements, the work of its authors' male contemporaries.

Such works of feminine art, mass or elite, are constructing for the first time in Western history a complete visible biography for women: the maturation forbidden in porn is a possible subject here. A complete feminine biography in art has hitherto been impossible for the simple reason that, like male biography, it involves the acknowledgment that its subject is somewhere autonomous, is sometimes alone, lonely, whether terrified or independent, and yet survives.

This construction of a total imaginative feminine biography is critical because biography is the base fantasy life of "healthy" people, the product of the profound hope that our lives be complete and entire and, most of all, shaped—that they not be the series of random incidents and fatally reiterated mistakes terminated at some unknown and incomprehensible juncture we sometimes fear they are. From such

Coming:

Jim Miller on Elvis Presley.

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entire female "biographies" articulated by pieces and stages in the culture, fantasies with some depth and significance about a particular phase or incident of the feminine biographical life cycle—a love affair, a job, a major life change—become available to art, popular and elite. That many men, and many women, are, and will continue to be, uninterested in, and even antagonistic to healthier female fantasy is both true and discouraging. Pornography is a phenomenon to be watched, and in the case of violent hard porn, to be fought. Yet porn's prevalence cannot alter the fact that for the first time a strong base for a variety of popular feminine fantasies not based on female humiliation is being laid; it will be built on. The Republican party, our long-time provider of political soft porn, with its anti-abortion, anti-ERA platform, may be acting out the dream-life of part of the nation, but the UN is right: it is the Woman's Decade, and probably her century.

Moore: G. E. Moore and the Cambridge Apostles by Paul Levy

(Holt, Rinehart and Winston; $18.95)

Paul Levy is a young American who has moved to London and carved out for himself a respectable place as a *Bloomsburylehrer*. He is, in other words, one of those writers who is continuing to analyze (and promote) the fame of the wonderful generation of novelists, painters, economists, and artists, most of them living in London a stone's throw from the British Museum and connected with Cambridge University, who captured the attention of the English after World War I and of the Americans after World War II—Virginia and Leonard Woolf, Vanessa and Clive Bell, Lytton Strachey and Maynard Keynes, Roger Fry, Desmond McCarthy, E. M. Forster, and the rest. Paul Levy has become very well connected with English literary society, as the preface to his new book testifies, and he has made himself particularly expert on the life and writings of Lytton Strachey; but in this book his subject is the person to whom many of the Bloomsbury group themselves pointed as their inspiration, even though he himself was scarcely ever to be seen in the neighborhood of Gordon Square. This was the Cambridge philosopher G. E. Moore, who lived from 1873 to 1958, and published one book of extended philosophical argument (*Principia Ethica*, 1903) before settling down at Cambridge in 1911 to a career as the leading expositor and teacher of analytical philosophy.

The story Paul Levy has to tell is curious, intriguing, and also disturbing, particularly for anyone like me, who grew up in the shadow of Moore and has felt obliged to develop some psychological distance, both from him personally and from his philosophical techniques. (When I was first married, my wife and I lived in the coach house at the bottom of Moore's garden in Chesterton Road, Cambridge; and I retain vivid memories of Moore in old age, working in his garden, singing Schubert *Lieder* in a light, pure voice, or filling his pipe before his weekly conversation with Ludwig Wittgenstein, who had succeeded him at Trinity in the Chair of Philosophy.)

It is a curious story because, except for one thing, the name of G. E. Moore would mean no more to the general reader in America today than the name of his counterpart at Harvard, C. I. Lewis, means to the general reader in Britain. That one thing was Moore's connection with a longstanding and influential secret society at Cambridge University, officially called the Cambridge Conversazione Society, but generally referred to as the Apostles—a name first given in scorn but soon (like the name of Quakers for the Society of Friends) accepted with pride. From the year 1820 on, the Apostles had had a remarkably consistent record of co-opting to itself the most brilliant Cambridge undergraduates of each generation; and it did so with most notable effect during the decades immediately before World War I, which saw the election of just about all the (male) members of the later Bloomsbury group, and also of the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, the mathematician G. H. Hardy, assorted Llewellyn Davies, Trevelyans, and Stracheys, as well as Edward Marsh, Rupert Brooke, Wittgenstein (of whom more later), and a dozen other figures notable in Cambridge and London life. Presumably, too, the society still exists, in its own clandestine way: Paul Levy speaks of only one current member—Jonathan Miller—though he mentions 1970 as the year that saw the first election of a female Apostle.

It is an intriguing story because Keynes, Strachey, and their Bloomsbury associates took Moore's *Principia* as their inspired text, while at the same time cheerfully misrepresenting its message.

G.E. Moore

The central point of Moore's concept of "intrinsic goods" was austere and philosophical: as contrasted with the classical utilitarians, he argued that material conditions (such as the state of drains) were not good in themselves, but only good to the extent that they promoted good human states of consciousness. Those states of mind alone were capable of being "good" without qualification. As illustrations, Moore cited the states of mind associated with human friendship and artistic experience; but there is no reason to believe that these illustrations were meant to be an exhaustive list, even of the most important "goods." Moore's Bloomsbury followers, however, understood him to be enthroning Art and Friendship—particularly friendship between men—as the supreme occasions for "good" states of mind. Hence there arose the odd spectacle of Lytton Strachey treating the chaste and unworldly Moore as a prophet of aesthetic homosexuality. And this, as Paul Levy makes clear, compels one to face the question: just what was it about Moore and his role in the Apostles that gave

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READING DURING MARRIAGE

Comic the drawl of small rain
down the wavering windows
poorly fitted to their sills.
Winter sees us reconciled,
lamp lights absurdly golden
pouring their slow pools across
nap, binding, and fluted shade.
We each have a book to read
and laugh at the odd moment.

All countries are implied here
in the dusk between covers:
Russia at night and Ireland
by moonlight—Dostoevsky,
Bowen. Roubles the color
of the rainbow will obtain,
in Cork up in the hot eaves
of the stone manor, the dress
ancestral that your double
wore. Brought to it by instinct,
iridescent, powerful
mirror gratuitously
reflecting what you can want
against the longing it cost,
you smile into your shadow.
Women. Best writers, best wives,
devisers of that twilight
toward which all things tend.

Mortally tired but nothing
wasted I see the fair sweep
(as you depart the carriage
wheel scoring her muff with snow)
of my face in your regard:

this no older than I am,
that no longer discouraged.

Mary Kinzie

him the power to inspire his friends and contemporaries, as much despite his actual doctrines as because of them?

Finally it is a disturbing story because of the questions that come to light when we look more deeply into the part that artists and intellectuals have played in English life, at least since the Industrial Revolution and possibly for much longer.

G. E. Moore came from a highly representative Victorian family of the professional class. His father was a physician in the south of England who moved to Dulwich (in South London) so as to be able to send his sons to school at Dulwich College; but Moore's earlier forebears on both sides had been connected, like E. M. Forster's, with that worthy evangelical group, so active in the campaign against slavery and other good causes, the Clapham sect. It was a large and fairly cohesive family, with no very obvious black sheep: in fact, one of Moore's brothers (Sturge Moore) became a well-known Edwardian poet. There were always live-in servants in the family house and, in due course, all of the children received through inheritance what used to be called "a modest sufficiency"; for some seven years, before Moore's return to Cambridge in 1911, he was able to live entirely off these resources. Despite, or maybe because of, the actively conforming life of his family, Moore had only one short brush with organized religion when, in his early teens, he felt himself called to hand out tracts at the seaside during the summer holidays. As with so many other young people growing up in the England of the 1880s, his exposure to the "doubts" of the time left him resistant to any beliefs for which no solid argument had (in his view) been offered, and this reaction against evangelical credulity played a real part in the genesis of those critical and analytical procedures that were characteristic of his later philosophical teaching.

Moore's formal education, too, was highly traditional. He studied classics at Dulwich, and probably would have continued to work as a scholar and teacher of Greek and Latin literature if he had not been elected to the Apostles early in his Cambridge years. Instead he found himself plunged into a weekly exchange of dialectical arguments in which, thanks to his natural scholarly exactness together with his refusal to be bamboozled, he was quick to excel. So, at Bertrand Russell's prompting, Moore switched to philosophy and began on 60 years of continual struggle to enforce accuracy, clarity, and precision of definition on the arguments of all those with whom he came into discussion. Eventually he was to become a supremely good "intellectual accountant," even more powerful in his own way than Socrates had been because he brought to all discussions a certain personal detachment—some called it immaturity—and held all matters of an emotional kind at arm's length. In spite of the influence his example had on John Maynard Keynes, Moore was never much interested in economics or politics; in spite of his long association with Russell, Hardy, and Whitehead, he never showed any curiosity about the natural sciences; and even his literary, artistic, and musical tastes were demure. Mention of such novelists as Dostoevsky would cause him to wrinkle his nose with distaste. I recall him saying, only partly in fun, that his favorite novel was *The Last of the Mohicans*; the novelist most to his taste was, in fact, Jane Austen. If Moore's intelligence had not been quite so sharp, and his family not quite so well off, he might in fact have turned into a scholarly edition of George Gissing's Mr. Pooter.

The crux on which Moore's career and fame turned, then, was his election to the Apostles in February 1894. At this point in his account, Paul Levy pauses to give us a concise history of the society up to the mid-1890s. It is a history that will be found fascinating by anybody concerned with the literary and intellectual life of Victorian England. The story is told here publicly and in full for the first time. We learn, for instance, that the subject of Alfred Tennyson's great elegy *In Memoriam*, Arthur Henry Hallam, was a fellow Apostle with Tennyson, and we watch the survival from generation to generation of such great Cambridge families as the Trevelyans and the Spring Rices, the Lushingtons and Chevenix Trenches. Paul Levy also provides a list of all the Apostles elected up to World War I, and he gives long verbatim quotations from papers delivered to the society during the years of Moore's influence. Apart from trivial details, the account appears quite accurate. (Did not the term "whales," in the society's jargon, refer to anchovies rather than sardines?) The only thing he does not tell us is how he obtained access to the ark in which the society's archives traditionally were deposited. Given Moore's own respect for the society's traditions, there certainly is much material in this book that could not have come from his papers and diaries, or even from the oral reports of his surviving contemporaries and successors.

This brings us to the crucial questions: How was it that this intellectually precise but emotionally juvenile philosopher could dominate the discussions of his fellow undergraduates at Cambridge in the first place? And how was it that he remained their tutelary

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deity even after they had left Cambridge and developed independent careers in the world outside? Paul Levy puts this influence down to Moore's sweet and guileless manner: he dominated by his character and example, not by his teachings, and his continued influence was the triumph of his innocence over their experience. But that cannot be the whole story. As we know from the memoirs of Russell and Keynes, D. H. Lawrence was horrified by the "brittleness" of the Bloomsbury group's chatter, and Wittgenstein resigned from the society soon after his election, for similar reasons. Paul Levy puts Wittgenstein's recalcitrance down to Austro-Hungarian jealousy toward another young Apostle, Ferenc Bekassy, but that is too easy. One must not overlook the wider importance of what Wittgenstein said to Norman Malcolm, much later, about Moore's "childlike" personality:

> You aren't talking of the innocence a man has fought for, but of an innocence which comes from a natural absence of a temptation. . . . He doesn't warm my heart (or very little), because what warms my heart most is human kindness, and Moore—*just like a child*—is not kind.

The real problems that this story poses (it seems to me) go much deeper than Moore's character, teachings, and personality, and Paul Levy does not pursue them. They have to do with the place of intellectuals in English history and society. Despite its collective self-importance and the later eminence of its individual members, the Cambridge Conversazione Society comes out of Paul Levy's account looking more like an American alumni association than it does like a serious, critical, powerful, or influential force in English life. This impression is partly a matter of balance. The first 263 pages of Levy's 299-page text bring us to the year 1911, when Moore finally takes up residence at Cambridge; his subsequent 47 years occupy only 35 pages. So this is not so much a biography as a study of Cambridge undergraduate life between 1890 and 1910, regarded as the essential background for understanding the later life of the Bloomsbury writers and artists. What emerges is the fact that, for the two dozen self-selected Apostles around whom the story is woven, their college days were, indeed, "the happiest days of their lives": they return to participate in meetings of the society with all the joy of Dartmouth graduates revisting Hanover for a class reunion.

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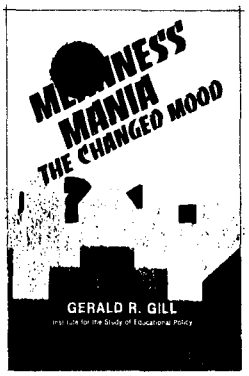

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In the eyes of loyal Apostles, no doubt, the severely intellectual nature of the society's discussions set it apart from any mere old boys' club, but that is where the doubts begin to set in. During the years about which Paul Levy writes, the actual topics of discussion were either strictly metaphysical or highly personal: this generation was in open revolt against the utilitarianism of its fathers and grandfathers, and turned its eyes resolutely away from all social issues. (It was very different in the 1930s, when Guy Burgess was an Apostle, and Marxist idealism took some of the brethren to their deaths in Spain.) In his admiration for the sweetness of Moore's personal manner, Paul Levy is candid enough to cite the one encounter that irritated Moore past all bearing: this was with Graham Wallas, a man with strong social concerns who helped to establish the London School of Economics. Nor does he conceal Moore's very strained relations with Bertrand Russell, whose passionate interest in "phenomenal" matters (the euphemism for the concerns of non-Apostles) often drove him to advance philosophically sloppy arguments. So what gave the affairs of the society their charm for those who had gone on to more worldly careers was not its relevance to their workaday problems, it was the chance it gave them to distract themselves from those problems.

This separation of intellectuals and artists from national ("phenomenal") affairs is an old story in England. Even at the height of the Utilitarian movement, in the time of Bentham, Austin, and the two Mills, nobody in London ever saw the intellectuals as a possible "alternative government"; nor would it ever occur to politicians in England to put novelists and academics in prison as threats to national security. The reasons why that is so are what raise the deepest and most disquieting questions about Paul Levy's story. Coming from quite different class and national backgrounds, D. H. Lawrence and Ludwig Wittgenstein both recognized that the life of intellectuals in England has, for a very long time, been fundamentally unserious. The role of the intelligentsia has consistently been that of court jesters, and the intelligentsia itself, for the most part, has responded with a narcissistic scorn for public affairs. There have been exceptions, of course, such as the late Richard Crossman, who used to say that every history don was a politician *manqué*. But such a personal confession only tests the general rule. It is no more true to claim that artists and intellectuals in Britain have consistently resented their exclusion from public affairs than it would be to claim than American housewives always have felt themselves to be bank vice-presidents *manquées*. In both cases the excluded have been all too ready to conspire in their own exclusion.

I am conscious of the need to add one qualification. The charge of basic frivolity that Lawrence and Wittgenstein directed against the English intelligentsia applies only to the English literary culture. C. P. Snow was right to see the scientists and the literati as divided from one another in this respect too. During the first 90 years of the society, as Paul Levy chronicles them, how few of the Apostles were scientists! It is true that James Clerk Maxwell was a member, but most of the great 19th-century Cambridge scientists—Darwin and Rutherford, Rayleigh, Jeans, and Eddington—slipped through the net. Evidently there was still something in the old Royal Society motto, *Nullius in Verba*. The undergraduates who made it into the Cambridge Conversazione Society were (it seems) the ones who had a way with words: that is to say, the most brilliant but not always the most reflective, the most exact but not always the most profound.

Stephen Toulmin

Stephen Toulmin is the author, with Allan Janik, of *Wittgenstein's Vienna* (Simon & Schuster).

Small Town America: A Narrative History 1620—The Present by Richard Lingeman

(Putnam's; $15.95)

It is part of my line of work to be sent out every now and then to find out what the Real America thinks about something—Iran, inflation, the presidential election, whatever seems confusing and in need of an injection of folk wisdom. When the call comes, I don't need to be told where to go. Not Rye, New York. Not Haverford, Pennsylvania. Not San Francisco or Coral Gables or Mount Desert Island, and especially not Manhattan or Washington, DC. Generally, cities are tricky, off limits except for certain bars and an occasional troubled blue-collar neighborhood; and for some reason all of Dayton, Ohio is Real. But for the most part, the Real America is to be found in small towns, especially in small towns in the Reality Belt, as the line of states connecting and including New Jersey and Iowa is known in the trade. In the white frame houses with their front porches, in the weedy trailer parks and the regional shopping malls, in the sepia brick high schools built in a sullen wave of post-Sputnik enthusiasm, lies the beating heart of our nation.

Sometimes indignant city dwellers ask me, why can't we be Real too? Why can't *our* top-of-the-head comments on matters to which we've given very little thought be granted instant gravity? As far as I can tell, there are two reasons, one sort of silly and one not. The silly reason is that small towns over the years have become the reputed seat of goodness in America—folksy, wholesome, neighborly symbols used repeatedly in popular magazines, movies, hack fiction, advertisements, and even politics. It is perhaps an accident that the two major presidential candidates this year are small-town boys, but it is certainly not an accident that they both talk incessantly about their provincial roots. When President Carter wants to get next to the American people, does he hold a "city meeting"? Never. Even people who hate small towns hate them in the same way that *Reader's Digest* loves them: as symbols of the mainstream national culture. For them small towns are small-minded and hypocritical just as the country is.

Loving or hating towns doesn't tell you much about them, which is too bad because of the other reason they're worth looking into: that they *are* the Real America. Their goodness or badness aside, I believe that small towns are the best repository not only of run-of-the-mill opinions, but also of a distilled and accessible version of the complex passion that drives this country. This view

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is based more on instinct than fact, but I cling to it for what I'd guess are the same reasons Richard Lingeman does: that small towns have, more than farms or cities, been the setting for the great works of the American imagination—the novels of Washington Irving and Hawthorne, of Mark Twain, of Sherwood Anderson and Sinclair Lewis, of William Faulkner. Even *Lolita* is a small-town novel, in its way. The small town has drawn the attention of the best American film directors (remember, for instance, where Westerns are usually set) and dramatists. There is something there that is far richer and more complex than the standard Norman Rockwell magazine cover.

That's why the task Richard Lingeman set before himself in this book is an important and difficult one. He had, first, to compile a history of the American small town, and this he has done very well. He has read virtually every word ever written by a sociologist, historian, novelist, or poet on the subject, and done a solid job of putting it all together. The only drawback to his research is that its total reliance on secondary sources makes him a prisoner of what's in the library; when there's a *Babbitt* or a *Middletown* to draw from the book works, and when there isn't it gets bogged down in a mass of the small details of social history, such as the contents of shelves in frontier stores.

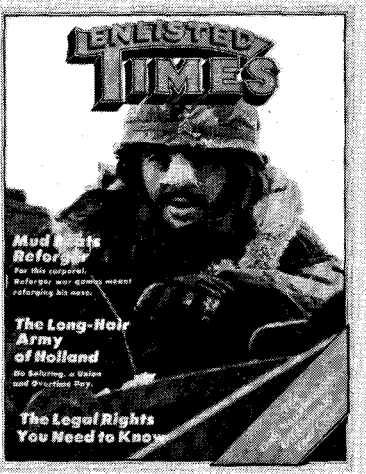
Lingeman's second job was to explain convincingly why small towns have so sparked the American imagination—which means rising above the clichés of the good-versus-bad debate, except perhaps by way of explaining why those clichés exist at all. Here he has not done so well, partly because he has applied himself far less to analysis than to research and partly because he can't seem fully to resist the popular syllogism about small towns: that if they are the Real America then they must be understood in terms of a war between nobility and venality, just as America itself must be understood that way.

In fact, the massive evidence Lingeman presents makes it clear that the good-bad question is irrelevant to most of the history of the American town. The Puritans' efforts to create religious quasi-communes (that is, towns whose main purpose was to be good) were more durable than those of the utopians of the 19th century or the communards of more recent years, but nonetheless they soon gave way to towns with an economic base and a political leadership made up of businessmen. This was no great tragedy, either, because towns founded to promote good rather than commerce have tended toward the authoritarian and unpleasant. By the time of the beginnings of the migration across the Appalachian mountains in the late 1700s, the unquestionably dominant figures in the founding of towns were traders, real estate promoters, and speculators. As a visitor from England, Morris Birbeck, put it in the early 1800s, "Gain! Gain! Gain! Gain! Gain! is the beginning, the middle and the end, the alpha and omega of the founder of American towns."

The Chamber of Commerce has lately taken to dressing up actors as George Washington and Benjamin Franklin to talk about how free enterprise without government regulation is what made America great, but even in the pioneer days it was an integral part of the entrepreneurial spirit to try to squeeze every possible dollar out of the government. Towns on the frontier competed viciously to be designated county seats by the legislature, because of the money it would bring in. In turn, the railroads (blissfully unconcerned with free enterprise, from their glory days to the present) would stick up the town governments for subsidies in exchange for placement on new routes. Even when it appeared in its pure form, free enterprise did not produce mass happiness and brotherhood. Land sellers gleefully fleeced land buyers. Shopkeepers took their customers for all they were worth; John Sutter, of the mill in California where gold was discovered, charged 49ers six dollars for a comb and 35 dollars for a dozen sardines. The small towns of the West were exuberant, but greed-dominated to the point of mass violence. The towns of the Great Plains, which were settled last, were considered by many of their residents to be bleak and dull.

Although these towns may not have been paradises, they worked economically, and by the late 1800s they had replaced farms as the main place Americans lived. At that point, they rather suddenly became the fount of national virtue. Just as corporations now exist (according to their ads and to the Republican platform) solely to provide jobs for the unemployed and to protect cute little birds, so towns began to be presented primarily as places of neighborliness, of well-tended lawns, of nice girls, of chautauqua speakers and bands in the park. Thirty years later, as the dominance of the small town began to end—1920 was the first time when

SOLDIERS ASK QUESTIONS, TOO.



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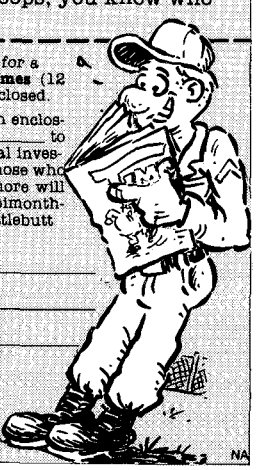

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most Americans lived in settlements of more than 2,500 people—it became, in the popular mind, even more perfect.

No doubt the towns really were pleasant, but the ferocity of the myth indicates something more at work—perhaps an impulse, in a nation entering a period of expansion overseas and bare-knuckles capitalism at home, to think of itself as innocent and folksy in defiance of the less pleasant truth. Lingeman himself, when writing about what he calls the "apotheosis" of the small town, gets so caught up in the enthusiasm that he doesn't really address the question of why it occurred. During small-town summers, he says in one especially fervid passage, "The days melted into one another like a golden, vernal dream, until suddenly it was fall, time to gather nuts and pick berries, and go back to school."

It sounds great, but there was obviously more to the story than that. One fascinating scrap Lingeman digs up is that of 299 high school graduates in the town of Aton, Indiana, from 1877 to 1910—the height of the golden age—90 percent left. In the same period, in other small towns, writers like Edgar Lee Masters, Sherwood Anderson, Sinclair Lewis, and Theodore Dreiser were also emigrating, usually to cities and usually to set down not-so-golden accounts of the towns they had left behind. It is with their names that we now associate the reverse of the apotheosis, the notion that small towns are gossipy, boosterish, intolerant, and generally a symbol of the evil in America.

Certainly there are many who hold that view today, but I think it's unfair to ascribe it to the best of the small-town writers, who were themselves much subtler and more genuinely torn. On the one hand, having grown up in small towns enabled them to see life in a richly detailed way—to watch people of every class and occupation close up over long periods and to know what was in their souls. That experience was the source of their work; they had a hard time writing well about the cities to which they moved. On the other hand, they felt, as their best characters did, that in towns, "the living force within could not find expression," as Sherwood Anderson put it. In books from *Huckleberry Finn* to *Winesburg, Ohio* and *Main Street*, the main character was not wholly disgusted by the town, but rather felt limited by it and ultimately driven to leave amid at least some feelings of regret.

That's a complicated process, and if so inclined you could turn it into a new kind of metaphor-of-America view of the small town, as crucible for the country's turning back from relentless expansionism and for the many individual frustrations that will attend that retreat. But certainly to react to all these feelings by saying that small towns are good or bad is to miss the point. Even to take the course Lingeman does—saying towns are a mixture of good and bad—is a reflection more on how we would prefer to see them than on how they really are. He ends the main text of *Small Town America* this way:

> The town as repose and sanctuary and the town as the home to which you can't go again. The town: good, generous, kind, helpful in trouble, cradle to grave, materialistic, insular, suspicious, set in its ways, canny, backbiting, smothering. . . .
>
> The town in our hearts.

The town in our heads, he might have said.

Nicholas Lemann

Nicholas Lemann is a reporter for the *Washington Post*.

Aberration of Starlight by Gilbert Sorrentino

(Random House; $9.95)

"There is a photograph of the boy that shows him at age ten." He is on vacation, the sun shines on his face, he is holding a cat and smiling. This opening sentence and image of Gilbert Sorrentino's *Aberration of Starlight* describe one of those bright snapshots that used to be mounted on and bordered by the black paper of old family albums. Each of the novel's four sections begins with an album moment: the boy's mother in a bathing suit, her would-be lover on a croquet lawn, her father sitting on church steps. They are scenes from the summer of 1939, a holiday in a rural New Jersey boarding house. Each is suffused with light, but the book is about the surrounding black spaces, the unphotographed sadness and frustration of an ethnic family during the Depression.

From Sorrentino, the novel is a surprising anachronism, as if Joyce had written *Dubliners* after *Ulysses*. Like *Dubliners*, *Aberration of Starlight* is a work of "scrupulous meanness" in obeying its self-imposed limitations of common people thinking common thoughts. In the fiction that Sorrentino has published with small presses over the last 14 years, one often hears a voice, by turns contentious and condescending, saying "Listen, I'm the Author and this is Art." Last year, in *Mulligan Stew*, Sorrentino gave that voice full throat and plenty of irony to produce a funny and occasionally tedious pastiche of literary parodies. In this new novel, the Author is nearly inaudible, his attention wholly on the world of parents and grandparents he creates with precision and sympathy. *Mulligan Stew* gave Sorrentino critical recognition. *Aberration of Starlight* should give him readers, for it is both humane and artful, dedicated to understanding characters who never could become Authors.

As in an album or in *Dubliners*, the people are poised, grouped around an event that does not take place. When young Billy Recco, his divorced and still attractive mother Marie, and her domineering father John McGrath come to New Jersey for their vacation from Brooklyn, where they all live together, they find among the front-porch regulars a new boarder, Tom Thebus, a divorced salesman. The novel's "action" occurs one weekend: Tom's taking Marie to the WigWam roadhouse, his attempt at seduction, her father's rage when they return, and Sunday's aftermath. It is a modest plot, even by modernist standards. But as Sorrentino turns this non-event forward and backward through the minds of the three principals and interested witness Billy, an intricate net of poverty, sexual repression, religious restriction, ethnic conflict, family politics, and romantic delusion is formed to show why nothing happens. In this net, human energy is used up in aberrations.

The last words of the novel are quoted from Brian O'Nolan (Flann O'Brien): "The meanest bloody thing in hell made this world." Sorrentino has compassion for the victims, revulsion for their God.

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McGrath's marriage was unhappy because his wife thought it sinful to let him see her naked. Marie believes God is good so He will punish her former husband. Irish and Italian pieties compete in random cruelties and planned pettiness. The aberration of heaven is one meaning of the title.

Starlight is also moonlight and stardom, romantic fancy nourished by movies and magazines. It is as mean as God. Tom Thebus is a leading man made of Bay Rum, summer whites, and catalogued witticisms, ready-made for Marie's fantasy of a screen lover and Billy's notion of a sporting father. When McGrath, like some wrathful God, leans out of an upstairs window to disrupt

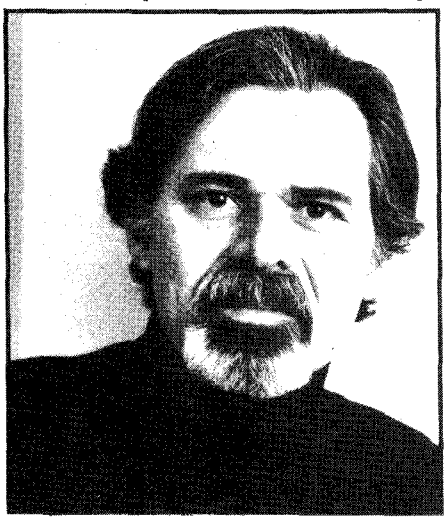

photo of Gilbert Sorrentino by Thomas Victor

Marie's and Tom's enchanted Saturday evening, righteousness is restored for Sunday morning. Ironically, the characters with aberrations, including the naive Billy who painfully reflects the adult world, are more substantial than Thebus, a throwahead to the *Playboy* philosopher of our time.

These are not subtle people, but Sorrentino gives each voice variety and the novel a structural elegance by constructing the four sections out of rigidly parallel materials—the introductory scenes I've mentioned; letters, both real and imagined; fantasized memories and conversations; conventional narration; stream of consciousness; and a question/answer format. One can read straight through or skip around in parallel subsections. This may sound like an audible and visible Author at work, but Sorrentino is arranging lives, not intruding upon them. His language is the language of Reccos and McGraths: repetitive, often banal, soaked in the catechism and popular culture. Reading from youth to age, Billy to John McGrath, one hears the people as habits of speech, limiting language passed down like an extra X chromosome.

Strangers' family albums do not hold us long: we don't know Uncle Jim and the joke he'd always tell just before the shot was snapped. Some biographical details in other books by Sorrentino suggest that *Aberration of Starlight* may be largely memory, but if so it is made available for the many. One does not need to have a name that begins with "Le" or "Mc" or ends with an "o" to recognize Sorrentino's characters and appreciate the paradoxical vitality and stultification of their aberrations. Yet finally *Aberration of Starlight* is constricted by its subjects and scrupulosity. Sorrentino's characters demand from him a new and admirable depth of emotional participation, but they do not—cannot—call forth the gifts of invention and style that are his signature. *Aberration of Starlight* is a disciplined and achieved work, perhaps Sorrentino's best novel, but still not the writer at his very best.

Thomas LeClair

Thomas LeClair is a professor of English at the University of Cincinnati.

The American Establishment by Leonard Silk and Mark Silk

(Basic Books; $13.95)

There are numerous words and phrases—power is one, political skill another, and the Establishment quite definitely a third—which serve admirably in everyday conversation without one ever quite knowing what they mean. Leonard Silk, the literate and eclectic financial columnist (to the extent that these adjectives are not a contradiction in terms), and his son Mark have joined to write a book about the Establishment in the United States, and they too avoid saying what it is. Instead they identify it with six institutions—Harvard University, the *New York Times*, the Ford Foundation, the Brookings Institution, the Council on Foreign Relations, and, if a trifle archaically, the business-oriented and once-influential Committee for Economic Development. Since Leonard Silk has worked for many years for the *Times* and Mark Silk is a teaching fellow in history at Harvard, their book counts, in a modest way, as an inside job.

Though avoiding any serious effort at definition, they do discover a common tendency in the institutions they describe (the *Times* slightly apart) and in the history they briefly sketch. *The American Establishment* has at its core a group of people who, having been well or sometimes exceedingly well treated by employers, legal clients, ancestors, or other happy circumstances, feel a responsibility for those who do not have it so good. In some of this there is an element of calculation: social and political calm, based on some measure of hope, is necessary for the continued enjoyment of what, undeniably, is a very pleasant life. The belief in amelioration extends in varying measure to foreigners. It also includes an intensive preoccupation with what is deemed to be the American interest in matters of foreign policy.

Though the Silks do not make the point as strongly as they might, this central core of concern is then surrounded by a penumbra of talent which is attracted by the natural need of the Establishment for people who can put the acceptable ideas in grammatical form; who are attracted by the income that the Establishment has at its disposal for good or anyhow interesting and often undemanding work; who rejoice in the travel, conferences, and committees that the Establishment finances; or who have an instinct for the currently fashionable cliché. Because the Establishment is in favor of moderately ameliorating change, it incurs the wrath of the Reaganite right that wishes for no change at all unless it be back to the last century and the gold standard. And it similarly arouses the vigilant left which is naturally suspicious of the Establishment's association with wealth and privilege as well as a good deal of fairly tedious economic and other rhetoric. Because its historic roots are in the northeast, especially Manhattan, the Establishment is also subject to the political suspicion, even paranoia, of the

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more parochial of our statesmen. And a more positive dislike is fostered by the aspect of inherent superiority that Establishment members, some of us with surprisingly little difficulty, are often seen to affect.

There is room for a difference of opinion with the authors on the institutions they select for study. I would have thought that the *Washington Post* now deserved almost as much attention as the *New York Times* and that something should be said of the emergence of the *Los Angeles Times* as an Establishment voice in the west. In economics and political science, Yale has at least as many solemn spokesmen as Harvard. Most people have long identified the Establishment with the more prestigious New York and Washington law firms. These, I would have thought, deserved a chapter of their own.

In telling of the *New York Times*, the authors also have had to contend with the compulsion of practically all *Times* writers to write a history of that institution; not even the early life of the Kennedy family can have as little unrevealed information. I also had some difficulty in connecting their account of the role of religion at Harvard with the modern role of the university in public affairs. (I might, as a personal note, observe a small error here. I am identified as taking a prominent part in the great Harvard wars of religion in the 1950s, the struggle between the theologically uncommitted members of the faculty and the devout and even pious president, Nathan M. Pusey. I did not participate. There are some conflicts which, with the very best of conscience, one can just sit back and enjoy.) But in general the history is informative, and it is especially rewarding on the struggles within the Establishment institutions.

These struggles, the authors show, all take precisely the same form: all are between the cautious and the openly, honestly frightened. From the resulting compromise, they further show, comes the political weakness of the Establishment. It urges social thought and movement in what, in most views of capitalism, is its most resistant territory. That, the authors rightly hold, is a very good thing. But then it succumbs to its constitutional timidity. Most Establishment members knew the futility of our misadventure in Vietnam—of our rush to save from communism a country where both capitalism and communism were a distant vision. But there was danger of criticism in being on the side of peace. Most establishment leaders would agree as to the danger that lurks in the urban wastelands, some of the worst being less than five miles from the New York centers of the Establishment operations. But effort here is complex and exceptionally open to criticism, as the Ford Foundation discovered to its great credit. So involvement here is avoided. All Establishment members know what awaits their pleasant world if the nuclear arms race is not brought under control. But here again the Establishment, or much of it, avoids unpleasant controversy. Better risk destruction than be thought soft on the Soviets or doubtful about national defense.

The problem of the American Establishment is not that it's too powerful; its problem is its willingness to surrender large and urgent truth to avoid small criticism. The authors do not quite get around to saying this, but it is admirably evident from their book.

John Kenneth Galbraith

John Kenneth Galbraith's A Theory of Price Control recently has been reissued by Harvard University Press.

Diary of the Cuban Revolution by Carlos Franqui

(Viking; $25, $16.95 paper)

The Winds of December by John Dorschner and Robert Fabricio

(Coward, McCann & Geoghegan; $15.95)

Millions of words have been written about the Cuban Revolution, but its genesis remains largely unknown and unwritten. Most people know little beyond the simple fact that 21 years ago Fidel Castro, a bearded character with a fondness for long cigars and longer speeches, led a triumphant revolt. Since then, a "golden legend," as Regis Debray called it, has arisen that has reduced the Cuban Revolution to a romantic fable of the charismatic Castro and his 12 apostles, whose numbers multiplied faster than a pyramid game, and who, in only 24 months of guerrilla warfare, succeeded in toppling the tyrant Fulgencio Batista on New Year's Day, 1959. Piercing that myth—partly of Castro's own making—is the challenge that confronts any serious historian of the Cuban Revolution.

Diary of the Cuban Revolution by Carlos Franqui chronicles the movement to overthrow Fulgencio Batista during the 1950s. An anthology of letters, radio bulletins, war communiqués, transcripts of taped interviews, memoirs, and excerpts from manifestos written by Castro and other leaders of the revolution, Franqui's book is an invaluable contribution to our understanding of the roots of the first socialist revolution to have been made without the help or leadership of a Communist party. For the first time since the publication of Ernesto Che Guevara's *Reminiscenses of the Cuban Revolutionary War*, we can hear the voices of those who made the revolution. These pithy, sometimes humorous, often polemical nuggets culled from history's raw material offer a unique glimpse into the minds of the young men and women who made the Cuban Revolution. Above all, this *Diary* throws light on the remarkable personality of Fidel Castro. It demolishes the stereotype of Castro as the Latin American macho revolutionary Woody Allen lampooned in *Bananas*.

Called an "impenitent debater" by one of the revolution's leaders, Carlos Franqui, born in 1921, is the self-educated son of a peasant. Castro would later say that Franqui had never been a revolutionary ("He couldn't even stay in the Communist party," Castro told Herbert Matthews of the *New York Times*), but Franqui took part with Castro in an abortive attempt to invade the Dominican Republic and overthrow Rafael Trujillo in 1947—the same year in which he was cast out of the party for his independent turn of mind. Later he helped organize the underground press in Havana, continued his opposition activities while in exile in Costa Rica, and returned to Cuba in 1957 to join Castro in the Sierra Maestra. There he

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ran Radio Rebelde, set up several newspapers, and directed most of the movement's propaganda work. After the insurrection's triumph, Franqui served as editor-in-chief of the daily *Revolucion* until 1963, when he fell from favor because Castro objected to the paper's coverage of his trip to Moscow. Nevertheless, for the next four years, Franqui helped the garrulous Castro write his autobiography—according to Matthews, he quickly gathered enough material to fill 11 volumes. In 1966, Castro asked him to collect materials documenting the early history of the revolution. Ordered to send the documents to Moscow, he became suspicious of Castro's intentions. In a recent interview with Tom Fiedler of the *Miami Herald*, Franqui said: "They said this [was] to protect the archives from atomic attack. But it was obvious that they wanted to make it impossible for any historian to show that the revolution wasn't made by Communists." Fearful that his work would never be published, Franqui smuggled copies of the documents to friends abroad. The final break came in 1968, when Franqui, while in Europe, publicly condemned the Soviet Union's invasion of Czechoslovakia and Castro revoked his passport in retaliation. He now lives in Italy.

The resistance movement, Franqui's book makes clear, was made up of men as diverse as Che Guevara, who insisted that "the solution of the world's problems lies behind the so-called iron curtain," and Rene Ramos Latour, a leader of the movement's urban underground, who, in a letter, castigated Guevara for thinking it possible "to free ourselves from the noxious 'Yankee' domination by means of a no less noxious 'Soviet' domination." Franqui documents the extraordinary contribution of the urban resistance; he estimates that 90 percent of its leadership was killed by Batista. He credits Batista's fall to the collapse of the army's morale, the physical expansion of territory occupied by the rebel army, a general strike supported by a majority of Cubans, and Castro's skill in uniting the ideological differences within the movement. These divisions had their origins in the different strategies and priorities of those who fought in the mountains and in the cities. The seeds of future defections can be seen in the private exchanges published here, which reflect the contradictions of class. The urban wing was composed mostly of middle-class moderates, many of whom felt betrayed by Castro when he embraced socialism in 1961. The guerrilla army, on the other hand, drew upon the peasantry, the revolution's chief beneficiaries and most vigorous defenders. What bound the movement together was the force of Castro's personality, his untainted past, and his demonstrated willingness to risk his life in the fight against the dictatorship.

Diary of the Cuban Revolution convincingly resolves the old debate over whether Castro was an opportunist with a hidden socialist agenda, or a social democrat and Cuban patriot forced by the enmity of the United States into accepting the Soviet Union's help as the price of the revolution's survival. On the basis of private correspondence translated here for the first time, it is clear that Castro regarded himself as a radical visionary and nationalist, whose politics were shaped more by the writings of Marti and Bolivar than by Marx and Lenin. (Even though the revolution's ideology is today officially proclaimed as "Marxist-Leninist," in a speech delivered in East Berlin in 1977, Castro embarrassed his more orthodox communist hosts by declaring: "I still don't know to what extent I'm still a utopian and to what extent I've become a Marxist-Leninist—perhaps I may even be a bit of a dreamer.") To be sure, Castro was familiar with and admired Marx and Lenin. "Marx and Lenin each had a weighty polemical spirit, and I have to laugh," he wrote while in prison on the Isle of Pines, serving a 15-year sentence for his failed attack on a Cuban army garrison on July 26, 1953. "It is fun, and I have a good time reading them. They would not give an inch, and they were dreaded by their enemies." Castro was enthralled by "the magnificent spectacle offered by the great revolutions of history: they have always meant the victory of the huge majority's aspirations for a decent life and happiness over the interests of a small group." He longed to revolutionize Cuba "from one end to the other."

Castro read voraciously in prison, often as much as 14 hours a day. A request for books and records made two months before the end of the war is worth quoting in full:

> *The Story of Philosophy* (Will Durant); *Remembrance of Things Past* (M. Proust); *The Sound and the Fury* (William Faulkner); complete works of Hemingway; *Paradise Lost* (Milton); *Solitudes* (Gongora); works of Graham Greene; *Materialism and Revolution* (Sartre); *Residence on Earth* and other works by Neruda. Records of Beethoven, Bach, Stravinsky.

Enamored with history's radical reformers, he was particularly taken with the life of Napoleon ("How generous Napoleon was with his enemies! I have read many books about him and I never get bored."), Kant, and Marx ("After breaking my head over Kant for a while, Marx seems easier to read than the Lord's Prayer."), and Robespierre, whom he considered an honest idealist:

> The [French] Revolution was in danger, the frontiers surrounded by enemies on all sides, traitors ready to plunge a dagger into one's back, the fence sitters were blocking the way—one had to be harsh, inflexible, tough—it was better to go too far than not go far enough, because everything might have been lost. The few months of the Terror were necessary to do away with a terror that had lasted for centuries. In Cuba, we need more Robespierres.

Yet later, in both private letters and public pronouncements, Castro disavowed terrorism as a tactic of revolutionary war. He was not a nihilist, and he deliberately eschewed, indeed, condemned, terrorism for its disregard of human life. In a letter rebuking his brother Raul for his reckless kidnapping of a group of US citizens (subsequently released unharmed), Castro said: "It is essential to declare categorically that we do not utilize the system of hostages, however justified our indignation may be against the political attitudes of any government." He went on to say that "such tactics would turn international opinion against us. . . ." In a radio speech to Batista's soldiers, Castro called on them to surrender, pledging that "No prisoner will be interrogated, mistreated, or humiliated in word or deed, and all will receive the generous and humane treatment military prisoners have always received from us." By most

Coming:

Anthony Storr on Psychologist Melanie Klein.

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Herbert Gintis on Paul Blumberg's 'Inequality in an Age of Decline.'

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accounts, Castro's practice—during the guerrilla war at least—was as good as his promise.

The Communist party considered Castro a dangerous extremist—it had condemned him as a "petit bourgeois adventurer"—and refused to have anything to do with him until Batista's downfall was imminent. Che Guevara, too, originally regarded Castro's movement as bourgeois, although he conceded that it was led by a man whose "image is enhanced by personal qualities of extraordinary brilliance." He was convinced that after Batista was kicked out the movement inevitably would veer to the right, at which point he was prepared to take up the cause of socialism elsewhere. But Castro's willingness to embrace more radical solutions when necessary continually surprised and pleased Guevara, as much as it dismayed the movement's moderates.

Castro's growing radicalization had less to do with the writings of Marx than with the American bombs being dropped on his men. In a letter to the recently deceased Celia Sanchez, a dentist's daughter and Castro's confidante and courier between the rebel army and the city underground, Castro wrote of his anger over the arms the United States supplied to Batista.

> When I saw the rockets that they fired on Mario's house, I swore that the Americans are going to pay dearly for what they're doing. When this war is over, I'll start a much longer and bigger war of my own: the war I'm going to fight against them. I realize that will be my true destiny.

While *Diary of the Cuban Revolution* is a necessary starting point for any serious understanding of the origins of the Cuban Revolution, the same cannot be said for *The Winds of December* by John Dorschner and Robert Fabricio, even though its publisher claims it is "the first comprehensive account of the Cuban revolution." Comprehensive it isn't, since the authors limit themselves to detailing the month or so preceding Batista's ouster. The book is written in the episodic, cinematic style made popular by the authors of *Is Paris Burning?*, and it is a less-than-thrilling example of that much abused genre.

It should have been a compelling story: the frantic efforts (mostly secret) of the United States to prevent Castro from taking over as various factions within Batista's opposition jockeyed for power. Instead, the authors, both reporters for the *Miami Herald*, have produced an overwritten, boring book. Oscar Wilde once remarked that "It is hard to have a good story interrupted by a fact." Dorschner and Fabricio clutter their story with dozens of useless facts that detract from the pace of the narrative and add nothing of significance. They apparently believe that constant repetition of the brand names of products will suffice to ensure historical accuracy, as in "Castro, first flying in the Sikorsky helicopter" or the US deputy chief of mission "drove his ivory-colored 1957 Oldsmobile" or "they had set up the 120-watt Collins 32-V-2 transmitter on a long wooden table." Preoccupation with this kind of "authenticity" is a vice.

The authors spent four years researching their subject and interviewed hundreds of people, including Castro, but all they have managed to do is rehash much that is already known. Indeed, they have relied heavily (and a little too obviously) on *The Cuban Insurrection* (1974) by Ramon L. Bonachea and Marta San Martin, the best single account of the urban resistance movement. *The Winds of December* is well-intentioned, but misses the mark since it substitutes anecdotes for analysis. A truly comprehensive popular account of the Cuban Revolution remains to be written.

Steve Wasserman

Steve Wasserman, an assistant editor of the *Los Angeles Times* "Opinion" section, has visited Cuba several times.

Mysteries

One worries about the books that don't get mentioned here, all those dogs barking in the night. In the last few months this column has passed over in silence such popular favorites as John le Carré, Ken Follett, Jack Higgins, and the better half, George V. Not a word here about the latest Robert Ludlum. Even no sound about personal old favorites, like Charles McCarry, Edmund Crispin, C. P. Snow, and Trevanian. But with limited space, perhaps authors such as these, who are assured of being given substantial commentary in the *New York Times Book Review*, need no help from me. They take the headlines, as it were, and solid journeymen follow quietly behind—and therefore are more worthy of attention here.

One such writer is Michael Z. Lewin, who has steadily grown—he must have, since his first book was called *How to Beat College Tests*, which still appears on the "also by" page of each of his books (a clue to something, that)—and who now, with *Outside In* (Knopf; $8.95), has given us an absolutely first-rate story. Lewin always has had an ear for dialogue, and he knows how to reveal the underlying tension between husband and wife in a single apparently irrelevant exchange, but until now he has not made very effective use of his chosen setting, Indianapolis (which seems exotic precisely because it is prosaic, and New York and Los Angeles, the locale for 80 percent of our detective fiction, are not), and he has indulged in irrelevant exchanges that reveal nothing except the need for padding. Here, in *Outside In*, Lewin has written a spare, unusual, and highly satisfying book, which turns on how Willie Werth, writer of mystery novels, tries to help the police solve the rather tawdry murder of a not-much-liked friend. Lewin gives us pages of Werth's latest novel, a hilarious parody of Mickey Spillane, Hammett, and Chandler. The novel leads Werth to thoughts about the real murder, which involves him with the police in ways that force them to act out the parody expected of them. Pursuit of the real murderer shapes the scenes of the novel. The result is a funny, sad, realistic book which is my candidate, so far, for this year's Edgar.

Another good read is Michael Gilbert's *The Killing of Katie Steelstock* (Harper & Row; $10.95). Literate, if on occasion oddly dated in diction, even for rural England, and tightly constructed, this novel carries us through the investigation of the murder of a small-town-girl-made-good in London television. The two or three truly basic clues, while carefully hidden, are scrupulously and logically present, so that one may match wits with Gilbert in a pleasurable old-fashioned way. Some may complain in the end that the solution turns on a trick which, though not often used, has been used too often—I can think of four other books that are constructed the same way—but the use nonetheless seems fresh here. This is excellent reading for the hammock.

A little less happy, though well worth pursuit, is William Marshall's latest Yellowthread Street mystery, set in Hong Kong, *Skulduggery* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston; $8.95). One can say little about this book except that it is the same mix as before: rather mad, frequently gruesome, at first glance given to

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stereotypes—especially the notion that the Chinese are incompetent—and at second glance, in more subtle ways making a quite sensible and, amidst the grue, sensitive statement about race relations. Less good, though with hints of promise throughout, is *Reflex Action* by Christopher Fitzsimmons (Atheneum; $10.95), which turns on a well-roasted chestnut, the defector from the East who, having settled into a comfortable and innocent life in the West, must suddenly run for his life when his old masters decide that he must be eliminated. The chase is well done, even though the hero's actions are exquisitely illogical at times in order to facilitate the need for being chased.

Robin Winks

Paperbacks

A Bend in the River by V.S. Naipaul

(Vintage; $2.95)

Salim, an Asian-Indian expatriate, comes to an African town at the "bend in the river" of a post-colonial state to establish himself as a storekeeper. While leading a normal life, he fails to see the warning signs of a spreading nationalist movement that threatens his place in society and, eventually, his life. Naipaul artfully conveys the political anxiety that strains the social structure of transitional nation-states. *A Bend in the River*, our reviewer Jack Beatty wrote, "enacts V.S. Naipaul's vision of the world, it dramatizes his inimitable voice, cool yet charged with emotion, the voice of a master of modern English prose."

Decadence: The Strange Life of an Epithet by Richard Gilman

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $4.95)

This is a thorough and brilliant assessment of the cultural and intellectual history of "decadence"—a concept that today has become a "free-lance epithet" applied to everything and meaning nothing, according to Richard Gilman. He expertly traces the diverse career of "decadence" from its first appearance in classical Roman times to its use in the literature of late-19th-century France and England. Banish it from the language, he proposes, with "its poor tattered vague possessions wrapped up in an Art Nouveau bundle on a stick. . . ." *Decadence* was nominated for a National Book Critics Circle award and received the 1979 Morton Dauwen Zabel Award of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in An Age of Diminishing Expectations by Christopher Lasch

(Warner Books; $2.95)

In *The Culture of Narcissism*, cultural historian and social critic Christopher Lasch examines the psychological, sociological, and cultural meanings of the new narcissism of the 1970s and 1980s, popularly known as "The Me Decade" and the era of "Psychological Man." Lasch addresses a variety of concerns in this widely read work—our educational system, the family, sports, the judicial system—and sheds new light on the role modern society has taken in fostering self-fulfillment at the expense of family ties, intimacy, and healthy adversarial relationships. "Lasch's study," our reviewer Robert Boyers wrote, "raises the central questions so forthrightly that it ought to touch off important debates in the academy and in our better journals of opinion."

Merchants of Grain by Dan Morgan

(Penguin; $3.95)

Using documents available to the public and testimonies of former employees, Dan Morgan has compiled information-packed profiles of "The Big Five" multinational grain companies that exercise enormous power over US farm profits, international food policy, and international relations. As the superpower of food production, America, Morgan says, could use its food leverage today as a diplomatic weapon as it has in the past. Our reviewer Robert Sherrill called Morgan's research "impressive, his writing lucid . . . a fine job of portraying the movement of food in the world, and its effect on whole nations."

Correspondence, *from page 3*

grade levels or to comprehend oral instruction delivered in anything but the argot of the streets.

It is high time to consider sharply raising educational and intelligence requirements for enlistment, instead of successively lowering them in the hope of meeting enlistment quotas. I suggest that the Congressional Armed Services Committees call before them a random selection of commanders with combat experience and ask them to state whether they would prefer to enter combat with (a) an appropriate number of currently enlisted men; or (b) half that number who are not only literate but capable of assimilating instruction in military skills.

Colonel Philip S. Lauben (retired)
Clarksville, Tennessee

What is 'TNR'?

To the editors:

The New Republic's August 16 cover asks: What is a Democrat? The question might be asked: What is *The New Republic?* I read your editorial's critique of the Reaganites and turned the page, expecting an analysis of the Democrats' struggle to adapt their traditional ideals

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to the realities of the 1980s. Instead I found a diatribe against environmentalists and other leftist "fringe" elements that the editors of *TNR* cannot abide.

The foundation of the Democratic party is being undermined precisely because so many, like the editors, who helped sustain the party's intellectual vitality for so long have turned away now and taken up with new, more fashionable causes. If a journal like *The New Republic*, which used to take liberal ideas seriously, is not going to stay around and help the Democratic party redefine its role and purpose—who will?

Iric Nathanson
Washington, DC

Z-ing out

To the editors:

TNR's editors show acute symptoms of lexicographobia by spelling "xenophobes" with a "z" ("Desperate Choices," *TNR*, July 19).

F. George Davitt
Delmar, New York

Mexican gesticulation

To the editors:

M.P.'s reference to those who "speak only that agitated Mexican Spanish" (California Diarist, *TNR*, July 19) at first glance implies—unintentionally, I think—that Mexican Spanish must be some sort of bastard dialect, or that the spoken Mexican version is difficult to understand.

Not so. Mexicans pronounce Spanish as clearly as any Hispanic nationality, Spaniards included. All vowels and consonants are enunciated without slurring, there is none of the lisping heard in Castile and one or two other provinces of Spain, and idiomatic slang is no more evident in Mexico than it is anywhere else.

If by using the word "agitated" he is referring to intensity of voice and upper-body movements, M.P. surely must realize that virtually all speakers of Romance languages are wont to gesticulate for emphasis.

Lee W. Douglas
Germantown, Maryland

Court precedent

To the editors:

I must rise in support of TRB and the United States Supreme Court. Agnes M. Waldron (Correspondence, *TNR*, June 28), in defending Ronald Reagan, has misstated history: the Court's refusal, in the *McRae* case, to stay Judge Dooling's order temporarily requiring public funding of medically necessary abortions for poor women—what Reagan calls "an abuse of power as bad as the transgressions of Watergate"—was hardly "the first time in American history" the Court "abetted . . . the expenditure of federal moneys which the Congress had refused to appropriate." The precedent that comes most readily to mind (and I am sure there are others) is the Supreme Court's 1973 decision in *United States Department of Agriculture v. Moreno*, invalidating a Federal Food Stamp Act provision that denied food stamps to households of which any member was unrelated, by blood or marriage, to any other member. (Legislative history suggests Congress was attempting to cut off federal assistance for "hippie communes.")

David C. Sobelsohn
Chicago, Illinois

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Jerusalem Diarist

Skeptical

"He who has not seen Jerusalem in its glory," the Talmud asserts, "has not seen a beautiful city." Yes, dear (perhaps exasperated) readers, my obsession has drawn me back again to the hill of Zion, defiant of fashion and force, faithful to prophecy and its people. I am here also to gauge for myself the tensions in this little place, so amply reported by the media back home. I phoned *TNR* in Washington and spoke to Jack Beatty, our literary editor, fresh from his own ancestral trek to Ireland, who assumed that the experiences of Jerusalem and Belfast must be similar: the impulse to crouch, paratroopers with machine guns at the ready, armored vehicles, forbidden streets, a war zone, and so on. The media mislead. Jerusalem is not like Belfast at all, and hasn't been remotely so since its reunification 13 years ago. Jerusalemites do live with terror as a routine contingency. There are no public trash cans, which are ideal for nesting bombs that kill at random, though the streets are clean all the same. I casually put down my briefcase in a shop, and within moments a customer, instinctively alert to parcels without owners, asked whose it was. Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem displeases the resident Arabs, but there is no standard governing men and nations that assures against the unhappiness of minorities. And the Arabs are a minority in Jerusalem, just as they've been for generations. They are entitled to civil rights and decent respect for their pride—and in Jerusalem they have both. This is more than what minorities have in the dozens of sovereignties under the sway of Islam. And it is more than what Jews and Christians were allowed during the brief period when parts of Jerusalem were governed by Arabs. During the 19 years in which the old city and the eastern sector were ruled from Jordan, Christians were forbidden to build churches and Jews were forbidden to worship at all. In fact, this was the only time since shortly after the dispersion 2,000 years ago that there were no Jews at all in their most venerable quarter, which was quickly made rubble in 1948—no Jews at the Western Wall, the only spot on earth venerated by the Jewish religion. This was a denial of human rights, a violation of the armistice agreement, and a flouting of UN guarantees. But the world was not much agitated. It will not happen in Jerusalem again.

It is the end of Ramadan as the great storm rages over which street will house Menahem Begin's office. The fury is greater at the UN than it is here in the Jerusalem *sûq*, but engage any Arab at a café and you're sure to hear that this is Islam's "third holiest city." Would the storm be less if Jerusalem were Islam's fourth holiest city or its fifth? How many holy cities can a religion preemptively lay claim to? This holiest city stuff, I am convinced, is just another pretext, like the new Jerusalem law affirming old realities, for the war of words and deeds against Israel. When the Hashemites governed here from 1948 to 1967, no Islamic ruler except the King of Morocco came here on pilgrimage. No one came, for example, from the Saudi house which is paymaster for the struggle to repossess Jerusalem. This disjunction between alleged convictions and actions doesn't seem to faze the Arabs. I read in Fazlur Rahman's scholarly *Islam* (University of Chicago Press) that the prophet Mohammed himself assigned Jerusalem a theologically subordinate position. The *qibla*, the direction of worship, is now always to Mecca. I see this myself. At the Temple Mount, where Solomon judged and his priests led the Israelite multitudes in prayer, the two great mosques stand undisturbed under the independent authority of an Islamic *Waqf*. Jewish worship is banned there by Israeli courts. In the Dome of the Rock, where Mohammed ascended on his white horse to heaven—also where, a local guide tells me, "it is alleged" that Abraham prepared Isaac for sacrifice—the Moslems lay bent and prostrate toward Mecca. This left their backsides bobbing up and down toward Moriah, where the holiness of Jerusalem begins.

If anyone deserves the Arabs as adversaries it is Menahem Begin. He, like them, is mesmerized by words, preferably words like "Destiny!" that bear capital letters and exclamation points. Begin throws Eternity around as if it were yesterday. There is no politician anywhere more abusive toward opponents. With a 14 percent approval rating in the polls, the Begin government survives on the enmity of the Arabs, the cravenness of the Europeans, and the aversion of his coalition partners to new elections. The government survives, but it does not function. Unable to get his cabinet to agree on who should succeed Ezer Weizman as defense minister, Begin himself runs that office one day a week. The Arabs could only be made happier if he were to run it two days a week.

I visited the Etzion air base in the Sinai, which Israel will turn over to Egypt in 1982. Only a blusterer like Begin could have obscured for the world how dangerously Israel has dared to live in pursuit of peace. The Sinai evacuation deprives Israel of strategic depth both on the ground and in the skies. If Israeli air power were ever to be confined to the air space of the 1967 borders, it just might not be able to function at all. An F-15 could not even turn around without entering someone else's space, which is only one reason why the Israelis won't countenance a West Bank state. Modern weapons technology makes the defense of small countries very difficult. This was meticulously explained to me by a dovish squadron commander, a kibbutznik, tough and idealistic. As the gang-up against Israel intensifies in the world, Sadat may feel pressed to join up again. He already has shown signs of being tempted. If he wants the Sinai back, he should resist. But who will guarantee that once he's got it back and Israeli planes can maneuver only in the narrow area between the Dead Sea and Gaza, he'll not be tempted again?

The big news about the Democratic platform, naturally, is not what it says about unemployment or the MX, but what it says about Israel. The words, of course, are predictably reassuring. "As stated in the 1976 platform, the Democratic party recognizes and supports 'the established status of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. . . . As a symbol of this stand, the US embassy should be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.'" So the Democratic party pledges to do what it pledged four years ago, but which the Democratic president hasn't done in the interim. In fact, Jimmy Carter has put more pressure on and against Jerusalem than any other president. The platform also pledges "not to provide Israel's potential enemies with sophisticated offensive equipment that could endanger the security of Israel." On the day the platform was approved, Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia committed his already quite well armed country to a "long and determined *jihad*" (holy war) against Israel. Will this alter Carter's plans to give the Saudis more super arms? If you believe it will, you are less cynical than I, more credulous than the Israelis. For centuries Jews survived by faith. Now skepticism keeps their country alive.

M. P.

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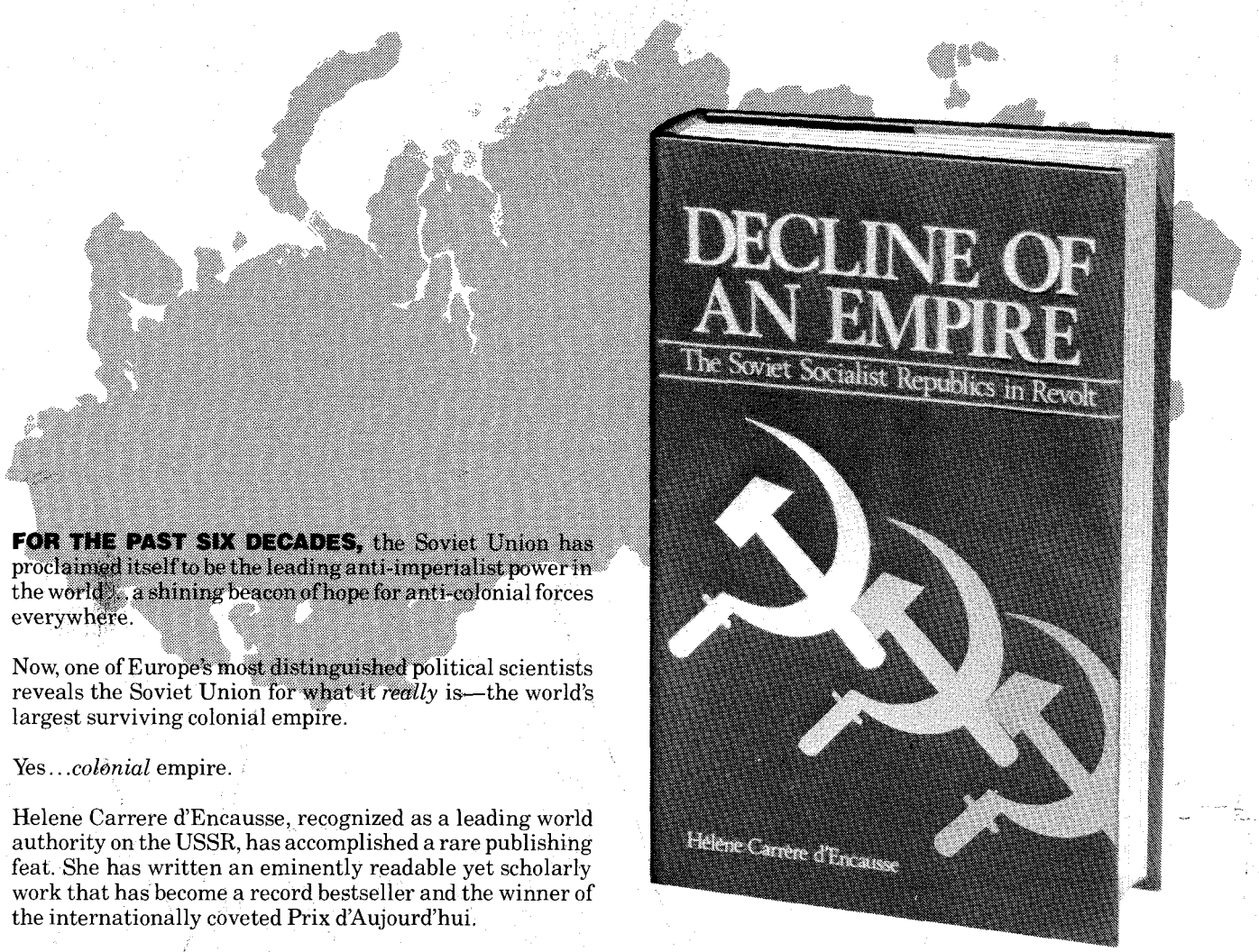

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